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EDUCATION IN KARL MARX'S CONCEPT OF LABOR

by

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Education in Karl Marx's Concept of Labor" submitted by William Northrup Blake in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation of Karl Marx's concept of labor and its link with his educational perspective. These Marxian insights are then brought to bear upon contemporary educational problems.

Interest in discovering the human dimension in Marx's outlook pervades the study. The illumination of his conception of man and of man's relation to nature and society furnish a solid basis for comprehending his recommendations for education. The metaphysical, ethical, and epistemological foundations of Marx's humanism as disclosed in his concept of labor are the particular aspects of this theory receiving attention.

Following the introduction, chapters two through five set forth the metaphysical aspects of Marx's concept of labor. This section commences with a disclosure of Marx's view of man and nature as his philosophical starting point. Labor stands as a mediator between man and nature and constitutes man's unique function as a species being.

Marx's locating of human alienation in the labor process indicates the bearing his concept of alienated labor has upon his entire outlook. The capitalistic mode of production accordingly represents the culmination of human alienation since under this system all human qualities tend progressively to be transferred to capital, a non-human thing.

Capitalism is succeeded by communism which is a society of men free from the alienated conditions of capitalism. The revolutionary activity of the proletariat rids mankind of alienated labor and sets in motion a system of material production which makes self-realization a possibility for all.

In chapter six the axiological dimension of Marx's view of labor is elucidated, showing why alienated labor thwarts man's freedom and ability to achieve moral goodness. The attainment of moral goodness becomes a reality under communism.

Chapter seven presents the essential elements of Marx's epistemological activism as related to his view of labor. The principle of praxis is a basic concept in his theory of knowledge.

Following an explication of Marx's general perspective, his views on education are next set forth as they are related to his concept of labor. Education plays a secondary role in shaping the character of human existence. Human labor primarily determines the character of all human endeavors, including education. Polytechnic education is shown to be Marx's distinctive contribution to education. The foundation for polytechnic education is Marx's principle of praxis.

The concluding two chapters present an evaluation of Marx's perspective as developed in this inquiry. In the first instance there is a critique of his general perspective on labor. This is then followed by a critique of his views on education. The extent to which Marx's views may be relevant for contemporary education is also developed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Origin of the Study

My earlier investigation of John Dewey's concept of work and its educational implications disclosed that the idea of labor can have significant import for education.[1] This study further suggested that Karl Marx's apotheosis of labor may likewise be productive in its importance for education. This suggestion came to light due to the fact that the Soviets during the Leninist regime drew upon Dewey's perspective and in particular upon his notion of labor to assist them in the complete transformation of their educational system. Dewey was held in esteem by them because of the close resemblance between his views regarding labor and education and those of Karl Marx.[2] That the Soviets linked in some respects Marx and Dewey intimated the fruitfulness of a similar inquiry into Marx's concept of labor and its relevance for education.

The connection which both Dewey and Marx have with the thought of Hegel also indicated that an inquiry into Marx's perspective might provide a basis for some future comparative study. Dewey's link with

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[1]William N. Blake, "John Dewey's Concept of Work and Educational Implications" (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, 1964), 114 pp.

[2]Albert P. Pinkevitch, *The New Education in the Soviet Republic*, trans. N. Perlmuter (New York: The John Day Company, 1929), p. 163.

Hegel is less direct than is Marx's in that he was under the influence of neo-Hegelians such as G. S. Morris.[3] The influence of Hegel upon both Dewey and Marx suggests that the common features of these two perspectives may furnish a basis for comparing two philosophies which have profoundly affected the educational systems of two apparently divergent societies.

Purpose

This study is an investigation of Karl Marx's concept of labor and its link with his educational perspective. These Marxian insights are then brought to bear upon contemporary educational problems.

Interest in discovering the human dimension in Marx's outlook pervades the study. The illumination of his conception of man and of man's relation to nature and society furnish a solid basis for comprehending his recommendations for education. The metaphysical, ethical, and epistemological foundations of Marx's humanism as disclosed in his concept of labor are the particular aspects of this theory receiving attention.

The study treats directly the few pronouncements of Marx made regarding education with a view to discovering what connection these have with the concept of labor. The aim is to determine the significance of his views for education and the relevance they may have for the contemporary scene.

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[3]John Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd., 1957), p. 117.

The study deals primarily with the earlier writings of Marx. Some of Marx's works were co-authored with Friedrich Engels, and these are taken as fully expressive of Marx's thought. On the other hand, no appeal is made to Engels' independent expressions to clarify Marx's position.

Relevance

This investigation is in the first instance significant due to the lack of studies on Marx's concept of labor and of its importance for education. Marx addressed himself to the problems of an emerging industrialized society, and the issues of human freedom and dignity raised at that time recur in the context of our advanced industrialized way of life. Education in particular has not fully come to grips with this new phenomenon of industry due to its adherence to traditional patterns of education which emphasize the intellectual over the practical. Marx's perspective deals in many respects with problems similar to those today and accordingly affords substantial insights.

Marx's concept of man as a practical being brings into focus a facet of the human often held in disdain or assigned minimal importance. The growth of technological studies in the schools has not been accompanied by an enlargement of our understanding of *homer faber*. A study of Marx enlightens this aspect of the human, and his recommendations for education are highly suggestive of means to give theoretical justification for the inclusion of such endeavors in education.

Design

The inquiry into Marx's conception of labor precedes that of his views on education. This plan assumes that a delineation of the philosophical underpinnings of his view of labor furnishes a basis for understanding his intent in education. The metaphysical, ethical and epistemological roots of his concept of labor will in turn be investigated.

The initial four chapters divulge the metaphysical components of Marx's concept of labor. This aspect of the investigation commences at Chapter II, "Labor—Man's Unique Function in Nature," with a disclosure of his view of man and nature as his philosophical starting point. The earlier writings of Marx provide the principal source of information for this opening chapter. Two primary sources in particular are treated of which his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* receives greater attention.[4] These *Manuscripts*[5] contain his most systematic elaboration of his general perspective and of his concept of labor. Marx's generous use of italics in this source as well as in others will be reproduced in each quotation throughout this study.

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[4]Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* in *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), pp. 63-219. Some use is made in this study of an earlier translation of this work: Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. Martin Milligan (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959), pp. 14-171.

[5]Reference to the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* in this thesis will hereafter be denoted as the *Manuscripts* for the sake of brevity.

The German Ideology[6] is the other significant source because here Marx expanded and clarified certain facets of his theory advanced earlier in the *Manuscripts*. Some use is also made of contemporary interpreters of Marx to elucidate certain aspects of his theory.

The following chapter, "The Notion of Alienation," introduces Marx's idea of alienation in general and its connection with labor. The influence which both Hegel and Feuerbach had upon Marx in formulating his own view of alienation affords a background for explicating in detail alienated labor in the subsequent chapter. The *Manuscripts* and his critical essays on Hegel and Feuerbach constitute the important primary sources. Appeal is made to a number of secondary sources to assist in briefly describing Marx's notion of alienation.

The chapter, "Labor—The Dilemma of Current Existence," delineates Marx's concept of alienated labor. The exposition illuminates Marx's argumentation for situating alienation in the labor process. The specific context of capitalistic economic production is however described initially since Marx refers primarily to capitalism in its most advanced stage as he witnessed it. The treatment of alienated labor in this chapter is mainly an exegesis of the section, "Alienated Labour," in Marx's *Manuscripts*.[7]

Chapter V, "Labor—Self-realization for All," concludes the

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[6]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology: Parts I & III* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 1-193.

[7]Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, op. cit., pp. 120-134.

inquiry into the metaphysical facets of the concept of labor. At this point in the study Marx's view of communism, as it relates to labor, is delineated, especially to the transcendence or overcoming of alienated labor and to the establishment of a society founded on liberated labor. The *Manuscripts* again appear as the principal source of information. Use is also made of other primary sources such as *Capital* I[8] and the *Communist Manifesto*.[9] Secondary sources assist to clarify Marx's intention at a number of points.

The ethical aspects of Marx's concept of labor are presented in Chapter VI, "Moral Values and Labor." The link between human labor and moral values is developed with an accompanying elucidation of the criteria Marx employs for moral assessment. The *Manuscripts* are the main source of data. Eugene Kamenka's work, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism*, was particularly valuable in delineating the criteria for moral judgment.[10]

Chapter VII, "Labor and Knowledge," presents the epistemological elements in his conception of labor. The principle of praxis as outlined in his *Theses on Feuerbach* is fundamental to an understanding of his theory of knowledge.[11] The *Manuscripts* are also a significant source for

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[8]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), pp. 1-848.

[9]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in *Selected Works*, Vol. I (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), pp. 21-65.

[10]Eugene Kamenka, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), 208 pp.

[11]Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach* in *The German Ideology*, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-199.

elucidating Marx's epistemological activism. Various contemporary interpreters of Marx contribute to a comprehension of this theory.

The link which Marx makes between education and his view of labor is delineated in Chapter VIII, "Labor and Education." The principle of polytechnic education is discovered to be Marx's distinctive contribution to educational theory. The educational pronouncements of Marx are few and scattered throughout his writings. The third of his *Theses on Feuerbach* and *Capital* I are among the more important sources. G. M. Cottier's work, *Du Romantisme au Marxisme*, provides valuable insights into Marx's educational perspective.[12]

The concluding section of this study contains an evaluation of Marx's position regarding education and labor. Chapter IX, "Evaluation I: General Critique," is an assessment of his concept of labor. This is followed in Chapter X, "Evaluation II: Educational Critique," with an evaluation of his educational perspective and with implications which his views on education may have today.

Problems

An inquiry into Marx's educational theory has its peculiar problems arising from the fact that he wrote very little about education as such. His educational ideas are discovered at various places in his writings, and at that they appear secondary to his main intent. This lack of systematic treatment means that any interpreter of Marx

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[12]G. M. Cottier, *Du Romantisme au Marxisme* (Paris: Alsatia, 1961), pp. 71-86.

must, as it were, reconstruct his conception of education from limited and unarranged bits of information. Misinterpretations may be the consequences of such an endeavor. In order to minimize this risk, Marx's educational principles have been connected with his general philosophical position where it appeared appropriate to do so. The difficulty of establishing his theory of education presents the further problem of deriving from his perspective those educational implications which have a bearing upon the contemporary scene.

In deriving educational principles from Marx's philosophy, or for that matter from any set of philosophical beliefs, it is not assumed that there is some logically necessary connection between the knowledge and beliefs on one hand and the educational principles on the other. In other words, philosophical agreement is no guarantee of educational agreement and *vice versa*, for many educational principles are acceptable to the holders of very diverse philosophical views. The point here is not to say that philosophical beliefs do not make their contribution to educational theory but to avoid claiming more for general philosophy than is the case. In moving from philosophy to educational recommendations one must not ignore the advances in the social sciences and in psychology which may materially influence final decisions in education.

That Marx expressed his views on education in the context of the nineteenth century presents the difficulty of knowing what recommendations he might have made at this time. The advances in knowledge and the changes in the social, economic and political spheres may have caused him to reconsider to some extent his views on education. In order to demonstrate

the bearing which Marx's views may have upon contemporary education, an investigator must to some extent attempt to imagine how Marx may have applied his general beliefs. This effort, however, assigns a tentative character to such speculations. To be aware of these problems in applying Marx's ideas to education and in associating him in some way with the conclusions is to admit that the general cultural and historical context have an important bearing upon educational theory.

In preparing this thesis I have been conscious, as any scholar educated in a democratic society must be, of the influence which my propensity to see and to read in a particular way Marx's writings has had upon this investigation. An interest in Marx's humanism has in many respects assisted me in giving his viewpoint as sympathetic a treatment as possible.

CHAPTER II

LABOR—MAN'S UNIQUE FUNCTION IN NATURE

Man As A Natural Being

Marx links his concept of labor directly with his view of man and nature. His perspective of the human and his environment constitutes the starting point of his philosophical outlook. He expressly asserts in *The German Ideology* that such is the principle from which everything else is derived:

> The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be verified in a purely empirical way.[1]

Men living in interaction with their environment, or nature, form the foundations of his thought. Marx identifies "real individuals" here to denote that man in his totality is his first consideration, that is man viewed as a physical organism as well as a conscious purposive being. The essential aspects of man he indicates by "their activity and the material conditions under which they live." The "activity of men" means basically the practical productive life of men, for "activity" is connected with the "material conditions" of life and not with the purely intellectual, contemplative aspects of life. That these premises can be verified empirically constitutes a significant facet of his philosophical

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[1]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 6, 7.

outlook. In contradistinction to the German philosophy prevalent in his day which gave undue importance to the theoretical, Marx begins with man as he actually lives in transaction with nature through his labor. He writes for example:

> In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven. That is to say, we do not set out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh. We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process.[2]

The practical life of man demonstrates and constitutes a criterion for evaluating his theoretical life.[3] In an earlier work, Marx asserts in similar terms the character of his philosophic thought.

> Socialism no longer requires such a roundabout method; it begins from the *theoretical* and *practical sense perception* of man and nature as essential beings.[4]

His acceptance of "man and nature as essential beings" thus forms the basic components of his perspective.

Marx advances four premises in *The German Ideology* which he

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[2]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 14.

[3]See Chapter VII, "Labor and Knowledge," for a detailed account of Marx's criterion for knowledge.

[4]Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 167. This most recent English translation of these manuscripts also includes other early works, namely his essays "On the Jewish Question" and "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right."

believes situate man and nature at the foundation of his theory and illuminate this starting-point. A brief examination of these premises serves to indicate in a general way that Marx views man as a natural being whose fundamental activity is practical in character. He states his first postulate:

> The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals. Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature.[5]

In other words, men must be in a position to live in order to make history. There is nothing more insistent and practical in human existence than self-preservation. The second premise is as follows:

> The second fundamental point is that as soon as a need is satisfied, (which implies the action of satisfying, and the acquisition of an instrument), new needs are made; and this production of new needs is the first historical act.[6]

This premise, according to Marx, accounts for the direction toward which human history tends, namely toward the proliferation and complexity of human needs. Man has a history because he surmounted what may be called his primitive needs and because he continues to expand and to satisfy new needs. The progressive enlargement of human needs results from man's unique ability to labor creatively. The historical development of man then parallels his productive achievements. The next fundamental point posits the social character of human existence:

> The third circumstance which, from the very first, enters into historical development, is that men, who daily remake their own life, begin to make other men, to propagate their kind: The

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[5]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 7.

[6]*Ibid.*, p. 17.

> relation between man and wife, parents and children, the FAMILY. The family which to begin with is the only social relationship, becomes later, when increased needs create new social relations and the increased population new needs, a subordinate one (except in Germany), and must then be treated and analysed according to the existing empirical data, not according to "the concept of the family," as is the custom in Germany.[7]

The form of social organization must inevitably change in accordance with the increase and variety of human needs. If this growth in needs is directly related to the growth of productivity, then it follows that the character of social organization must keep pace with the enlargement and enrichment of productivity. The fourth premise, Marx believes, follows from the first three:

> It follows from this that a certain mode of production, or industrial stage, is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a "productive force." Further, that the multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society, hence that the "history of humanity" must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange.[8]

The actual nature and condition of human society at any time is to be evaluated in terms of the "productive forces" operative among men. "Productive forces" include the mode of co-operative endeavor as well as the techniques of production. Human production always carries with it the notion of co-operative action such that men are cemented together socially by their labor and the character of this social bond can be assessed by examining the labor relations.

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[7]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 17.

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 18.

These four premises make no appeal to a supernatural being as a factor in human experience. Marx explicitly rejects in the *Manuscripts* the reality of such an entity.[9] The whole account of human existence is established, according to him, by an appeal to man as a natural being. Any creditable *Weltanschauung* must accordingly be consistently naturalistic if it is to provide illumination. Marx then indeed gives prominence to the principle that man is a natural being.

Naturality Implies Objectivity

The principle of man's naturality is equivalent to his objectivity. This means that the real, concrete man standing with his feet on the ground has an objective character. The objective character of his being can be deduced from the objective character of his activities. For Marx, only an objective being has objective efficacy, for "a being which does not have its nature outside itself is not a *natural* being and does not share in the being of nature."[10] Man creates and constitutes objects only because he is himself constituted by objects, being himself in origin a part of nature.[11]

> When real, corporeal *man*, with his feet firmly planted on the solid ground, inhaling and exhaling all the powers of nature, *posits* his real objective faculties, as a result of his alienation, as alien objects, the *positing* is not the subject of this act but the subjectivity of *objective* faculties whose action

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[9]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 165, 166.

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 207.

[11]Gustav A. Wetter, *Dialectical Materialism*, trans. Peter Heath (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 27.

> must also, therefore, be *objective*. An objective being acts objectively, and it would not act objectively if objectivity were not part of its essential being. It creates and establishes *only objects, because* it is established by objects, and because it is fundamentally *natural*. In the act of establishing it does not descend from its "pure activity" to the *creation of objects*; its *objective* product simply confirms its *objective* activity, its activity as an objective, natural being.[12]

As a natural being man is intimately linked with his environment. This link is his objective activities, that is his acts of creating and constituting objects, which in turn create and establish the human. Man himself then is only a part of nature, tied to her apron-strings. His primary activity is not spiritual, not cognitive, but a real material activity in which he produces real objects and puts his energies, himself in fact, into them.[13]

As an objective creature in nature, man is in one sense an active being, equipped with natural vital forces; in another sense he is also a passive being, in so far as he is subject to numerous objects existing independently of himself and confronting him from without. Marx identifies these two aspects of man as a natural objective being in his *Manuscripts*:

> *Man* is directly a *natural being*. As a natural being, and as a living natural being he is, on the one hand, endowed with *natural powers* and *faculties*, which exist in him as tendencies and abilities, as *drives*. On the other hand, as a natural, embodied, sentient, objective being he is a *suffering*, conditioned and limited being, like animals and plants. The *objects* of his

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[12]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

[13]Gustav A. Wetter, *op. cit.*

> drives exist outside himself as *objects* independent of him, yet they are *objects* of his *needs*, essential *objects* which are indispensable to the exercise and confirmation of his faculties.[14]

Man is in a situation of natural necessity, but it is the specific trait of man that he is active, that is, that he has freedom of action and can accordingly find his way out of a complete identification with natural necessity.

The concept of man's objectivity situates man in a position of harmony with nature. To Marx, "a being which has no object outside itself is not an objective being. A being which is not itself an object for a third being has no being for its *object*, i.e. it is not objectively related and its being is not objective."[15] Or a being that is not in its turn an object for some other being has equally little claim to objectivity. Marx explains in the *Manuscripts*:

> The fact that man is an *embodied*, living, real, sentient, objective being with natural powers, means that he has *real, sensuous objects* as the objects of his being, or that he can only express his being in real, sensuous objects. *To be* objective, natural, sentient and at the same time to have object, nature and sense outside oneself, or to be oneself object, nature and sense for a third person, is the same thing.[16]

Thus there is no opposition in this respect between man and nature, subject and object, but "only a mutual interfusion and dependence; man becomes a product of Nature, and Nature a product of man."[17] By relating

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[14]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 206, 207.

[15]*Ibid.*, p. 207.

[16]*Ibid.*

[17]Gustav A. Wetter, *op. cit.*

himself to the objective world, through his powers, the world becomes real to man and man becomes aware of his own identity as an objective, natural being.

Man is not however a natural being pure and simple like an animal which accepts nature as it finds her, but exerts himself consciously upon her and struggles to bend her to his needs and also, on the other hand, to adapt himself to nature.

> But man is not merely a natural being; he is a *human* natural being. He is a being for himself, and, therefore, a *species-being*; and as such he has to express and authenticate himself in being as well as in thought.[18]

This means for Marx that man has a history which for him is "a conscious process and thus one which is consciously self-transcending."[19] Man progresses, evolves, consciously and insistently away from the rigid determinations of natural necessity which characterize infrahuman entities.

That man's naturality is equivalent to his objectivity means concretely for Marx that man is a being who works. The first of his four premises in *The German Ideology* discloses the significance of production for the human. Production of a livelihood is man's first and most insistent activity.

> The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself. And indeed this is an historical act, a fundamental condition of all history, which today, as thousands of years ago, must daily

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[18]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 208.

[19]*Ibid.*

> and hourly be fulfilled merely in order to sustain human life.[20]

Labor here stands as the activity through which man produces something in order to satisfy his needs. The fecundity of labor however goes far beyond this since the transformation of nature renders the inhuman force of nature a human force in so far as man imposes something of himself on to nature in the act of appropriation for the satisfaction of his needs. This imposition of the human form on to nature through labor Marx denotes by his concept of objectification. He writes:

> It is just in his work upon the objective world that man really proves himself as a *species-being*. This production is his active species-life. By means of it nature appears as *his* work and his reality. The object of labour is, therefore, the *objectification of man's species-life*; for he no longer reproduces himself merely intellectually, as in consciousness, but actively and in a real sense, and he sees his own reflection in a world which he has constructed.[21]

Nature reflects a human quality once it has been transformed by labor, but the transformation of nature in labor is also a production of the human as well:

> Nature, as it develops in human history, in the act of genesis of human society, is the actual nature of man; thus nature, as it develops through industry, though in an *alienated* form, is truly *anthropological* nature.[22]

Man creates his nature through his labor. What man is can be determined by the products of his labor. The product of labor Marx defines as "labor

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[20]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 16.

[21]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 128.

[22]*Ibid.*, p. 164.

which has been embodied in an object and turned into a physical thing; this product is an objectification of labour."[23] Since there is the embodiment of the human in the objects of labor, man's nature according to Marx is this objective manifestation. Man thereby creates himself through his appropriation of nature for the satisfaction of his needs. All human existence is viewed by Marx as "nothing but the creation of man by human labour, and the emergence of nature for man."[24] Marx picturesquely describes this transaction between man and nature in *Capital* I:

> Labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and Nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material reactions between himself and Nature. He opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate Nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants. By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature.[25]

For Marx then the concept of man as an objective, natural being means concretely that man is a being who produces himself in the process of producing material objects. This is a case of the humanization of nature for the humanization of man.

Human Naturality Implies Sociality

This dual humanization of man and nature is enlightened according

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[23]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

[24]*Ibid.*, p. 166.

[25]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), pp. 197, 198.

to Marx by his concept of species being. He asserts the relation between these concepts in his first manuscript of 1844 where he discusses "Alienated Labor."

> Productive life is, however, species-life. It is life creating life. In the type of life activity resides the whole character of a species, its species-character; and free conscious activity is the species-character of human beings.[26]

Productive life is species life and free, conscious activity is the specific character of this species life for humans. Production has a life-generating role with respect to the human species. Production is not defined essentially as the manufacture of commodities but as a life-creating process. The life generated is human life. This process is operative not in the creation of atomistic, particular humans, but in transformation of the whole species, the achievement of sociality by all. The 'man' of whom Marx speaks is thus understood to be man in general, mankind, or the human species.[27] This humanization of nature for the humanization of man is the self-realization of man in this generic sense.

Man alone is called a 'species being'—he belongs to a species in the sense that the common elements of his type classify and distinguish him from others. By denoting man as a 'species being' Marx ascribes a unique trait to man not characteristic of other species. A definition of his particular use of the term 'species being' is advanced in the *Manuscripts*:

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[26]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 127.

[27]Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 129.

> Man is a species-being not only in the sense that he makes the community (his own as well as those of other things) his object both practically and theoretically, but also (and this is simply another expression for the same thing) in the sense that he treats himself as the present, living species, as a *universal* and consequently free being.[28]
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> Conscious life activity distinguishes man from the life activity of animals. Only for this reason is he a species-being. Or rather, he is only a self-conscious being, i.e., his own life is an object for him, because he is a species-being. Only for this reason is his activity free activity.[29]

A particular kind of consciousness distinguishes man as a species being; a consciousness in which man is capable of treating himself as both subject and object, as a self-conscious being. This consciousness affords man a freedom of purpose and movement such that he attains a universal grasp of nature both theoretically and practically. T. B. Bottomore, in an editor's note, discloses the source and significance of this concept for Marx:

> The terms "species-life" (*Gattungsleben*) and "species-being" (*Gattungswesen*) are derived from Feuerbach. In the first chapter of *Das Wesen des Christentums* (*The Essence of Christianity*), Leipzig, 1841, Feuerbach discusses the nature of man, and argues that man is to be distinguished from animals not by "consciousness" as such, but by a particular kind of consciousness. Man is not only conscious of himself as a member of the human species, and so he apprehends a "human essence" which is the same in himself and in other men. According to Feuerbach this ability to conceive of "species" is the fundamental element in the human power of reasoning: "Science is the consciousness of the species." Marx, while not departing from this meaning of the terms, employs them in other contexts; and he insists more strongly than Feuerbach that since this "species-consciousness" defines the nature

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[28]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 126.

[29]*Ibid.*, p. 127

> of man, man is only living and acting authentically (i.e. in accordance with his nature) when he lives and acts deliberately as a "species-being," that is, as a *social* being.[30]

The particular Marxian application of this concept is the insistence that man's fundamental activity is objective and practical. Man views himself for what he is, namely a being who produces changes in nature to satisfy his needs and who creates himself in this act.

Marx specifies in greater detail that man as a species being has a 'universal' quality that marks his relation to nature. In the first instance man is a creature of physical necessity like all animals, but rigid limitations are not imposed upon man's ability to deploy all of nature to satisfy his physical needs. The "species-life" of both men and animals is intimately related to nature in a general sense in that both live from nature.

> Species-life, for man as for animals, has its physical basis in the fact that man (like animals) lives from inorganic nature, and since man is more universal than an animal so the range of inorganic nature from which he lives is more universal.[31]

Even in his physical existence man is distinguished from the animals by virtue of his adaptability to the multitude of physical conditions that may confront him.

The theoretical aspect of generic man's relation with nature means that nature provides all the sensuous objects for his consciousness.

> Plants, animals, minerals, air, light, etc., constitute, from the theoretical aspect, a part of human consciousness as objects

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[30]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 13, see footnote #2.

[31]*Ibid.*, p. 126.

> of natural science and art; they are man's spiritual inorganic nature, his intellectual means of life, which he must first prepare for enjoyment and perpetuation.[32]

These sensuous external objects constitute an integral part of human consciousness. They are not merely external, but they form a part of consciousness; as Marx puts it, they are "man's spiritual inorganic nature."[33] Marx does not postulate a Cartesian dualism between consciousness and matter. Descartes' dualism is founded on his contention that human consciousness is entirely an inner, private experience. Descartes posits only one certain point of reality, the *Cogito ergo sum* upon which he can deductively construct a knowledgeable perspective of the world. Thus there is a radical distinction between self-consciousness and the remainder of reality. Marx to the contrary postulates a closer link between mind and matter by claiming that objective reality itself is an integral part of human consciousness. This problem regarding the relationship between consciousness and external objects is traditionally called the subject-object problem. Descartes radically splits the subject-object relation while Marx attempts to remove any significant distinction between the subject and the object.

The universal and free character of generic man's relation to nature manifests itself in a practical sense in two ways. The practical aspect of this relation means that nature furnishes not only the means of his physical existence but also the means for his life activity, his

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[32]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 126.

[33]*Ibid.*

distinguishing species character.

> So also, from the practical aspect, they form a part of human life and activity. In practice man lives only from these natural products, whether in the form of food, heating, clothing, housing, etc. The universality of man appears in practice in the universality which makes the whole of nature into his inorganic body: (1) as a direct means of life; and equally (2) as the material object and instrument of his life activity. Nature is the inorganic body of man; that is to say nature, excluding the human body itself. To say that man lives from nature means that nature is his *body* with which he must remain in a continuous interchange in order not to die.[34]

Just as nature constitutes a part of human consciousness so it forms a part of the body of man, the inorganic body of man, i.e., the part which has not become a part of his own organic body. This inorganic complement provides the means to keep the organic body alive; it also furnishes the massive array of objects upon which his creative efforts are expended. This interchange between man and nature is what has been described above as the humanization of nature which has the reciprocal effect of humanizing man.

The practical dimension of generic man's relation to nature is likewise consistent with Marx's principle that man and nature are essentially one, but in holding to this fundamental unity Marx does postulate a *body* and a *mind* for man. The question then arises as to exactly how can he realize this unity and yet make distinctions within it such as to give ontological status to both the body and the mind. Marx precludes these objections when he succinctly states:

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[34] Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 127.

> The statement that the physical and mental life of man, and nature, are interdependent means simply that nature is interdependent with himself, for man is a part of nature.[35]

Man is a natural being in constant interaction with nature through his productive energies. Marx here does not postulate a pluralistic world but rather a monistic one. His view of the unity of body, mind and nature is intelligible only in terms of his monistic presuppositions.

In viewing man as a generic being Marx does not thereby negate the importance of the individual. The individual is comprehensible only in the context of his identity with the species. Marx seeks to avoid the abstractions so common to the German philosophy of his day, but the possibility of his advancing an abstraction is apparent in the concept of man as a universal, generic being. Aware of this possibility, Marx clarifies his conception of the relation between individual and generic man. The individual man and the generic man are not mutually exclusive but are linked in such a way that neither can be explained without the other.

> It is above all necessary to avoid postulating "society" once again as an abstraction confronting the individual. The individual *is* the *social being*. The manifestation of his life—even when it does not appear directly in the form of a communal manifestation, accomplished in association with other men—is, therefore, a manifestation and affirmation of *social life*. Individual human life and species-life are not different things, even though the mode of existence of individual life is necessarily either a more *specific* or a more *general* mode of species-life, or that of species-life a *specific* or more *general* mode of individual life.[36]

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[35]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 127.

[36]*Ibid.*, p. 158.

This "man" who is being constantly transformed by the transformation of nature is man writ large in the species, but the individual at any particular moment in history is everything there is in the species life at that moment. The particular individual, however, is not unchanging but is mortal while the species continues.[37] Tucker expresses Marx's concept of the relation between individual life and the species life in these words: "The life of the individual is a microcosm of the life of man on the generic scale."[38] It seems then that this concept is nothing else but the universal individual which means that the individual is representative of the entire species. The human person is aware of his role as a species being, and this awareness is the ground for his being in actuality a 'universal individual,' or in Marx's words man is "a really *individual* communal being."[39]

> In his *species-consciousness* man confirms his real *social life*, and reproduces his real existence in thought; while conversely, species-life confirms itself in species-consciousness and exists for itself in its universality as a thinking being. Though man is a unique individual—and it is just his particularity which makes him an individual, a really *individual* communal being—he is equally the *whole*, the ideal whole, the subjective existence of society as thought and experienced. He exists in reality as the representation and the real mind of social existence, and as the sum of human manifestations of life.[40]

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[37]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 159.

[38]Robert C. Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 130. Tucker's choice of the term "microcosm" may be misleading if it connotes that the individual is an isolate who merely reflects some entity outside man.

[39]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 158.

[40]*Ibid.*

Marx here affirms that man is a unique individual and at the same time each individual is an embodiment of the whole species. It is accordingly against the constitution of humanity to erect a state or social system which purportedly represents the human's sense of species life, or sense of social life. This social consciousness is an integral part of each individual, and to establish this social consciousness in an external social order is to erect an abstraction that alienates man from his true character. It seems that for Marx individuals are interrelated and these relationships are not mythical trivialities invented by human imagination, but dynamic characteristics of the real constitution of the species. Every individual is unique, but he is also a specimen of his type whose general pattern finds embodiment in all others of the same type. The type thus prescribes a standard to which its particular embodiments must conform. The unity of mankind is secured by its congenital, species constitution, and this is the basis for human social life.

The species character of man is equivalent in Marxian terms to the idea of a human essence. These two concepts express similar meanings in Marx's discussion of the import of the natural relation between man and woman:

> It follows from the character of this relationship how far *man* has become, and has understood himself as, a *species-being*, a *human being*. The relation of man to woman is the *most natural* relation of human being to human being. It indicates, therefore, how far man's *natural* behaviour has become *human* and how far his *human* essence has become a *natural* essence for him, how far his *human nature* has become *nature* for him.[41]

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[41]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

Here the character of this species relationship is treated as synonymous to the human essence. Erich Fromm indicates that Marx uses these terms synonymously:

> What Marx means by "species-character" is the essence of man; it is that which is universally human, and which is realized in the process of history by man through his productive activity.[42]

That the human essence for Marx is that which is common to the generic constitution of all men is likewise expressed by Eugene Kamenka.

> For Marx, morality and law represented the unflowering of man's essential being (*Wesen*) and an essence, according to Marx, is always truly universal. The human essence or spirit is what is common to all men: their eternal nature. It must therefore express itself above all in the unity of men, in overcoming the divisions created by their empirical particularity.[43]

Kamenka adds the adjective "eternal" to Marx's concept of a human nature. This can only be an implication made by Kamenka because Marx does not modify his concept explicitly with this adjective. Kamenka at another point in his book provides an illuminating analysis of Marx's concept of the human essence.[44] The analysis reveals that the idea of a universal human essence is not something arrived at by enumeration and generalization, but rather it is understood as something constituted of man's very being. Kamenka writes:

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[42]Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961), p. 34.

[43]Eugene Kamenka, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 37.

[44]Kamenka's analysis of Marx's concept of the human essence quoted here represents the thought of Marx in his earlier writings. At other places in his book Kamenka attempts to show that Marx departed from this earlier position.

> The contrast here is between universality as a mere collection, universality treated extensionally, and universality as an intrinsic character, universality treated intensionally. It is the same distinction as the distinction between Rousseau's 'truly general' will and what is merely the common will of the majority, or even of an entire totality. The rational State is the State of this intensional universality. Its universality rests on the fact that this is a form of the human essence of man's essential being, which is, in virtue of its character as an essence, common to the entire species.[45]
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> . . . . . .
>
> This is the significance of his insistence that in the truly human society each man represents each other, that every activity carried out in this society is *my* activity. He bases this, as we have seen, on a seemingly metaphysical notion of the human essence as truly universal in a qualitative, intensional sense and not in a merely distributive sense.[46]

The concept of a human essence signifies for Marx that man has a constitution common to all which determines the fundamental elections of the human species.

That humans have a species character does not mean for Marx that man is rigidly determined by the nature of his species. Plasticity marks the human species over against the rigid character of the animals:

> The animal is one with its life activity. It does not distinguish the activity from itself. It is *its activity*. But man makes his life activity itself an object of his will and consciousness. He has a conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he is completely identified.[47]

Human activity is free activity due to man's ability to depart from the limitations of natural necessity, whereas the rigid character of the constitution of infrahuman life fix it as a being bound to natural necessity.

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[45]Eugene Kamenka, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[46]*Ibid.*, pp. 98, 99.

[47]Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

Human Naturality Implies Historicity

Man accedes to this species being through the mediation of labor. In other words, man as a social being achieves his sociality, his essence, in history by his labor. The cumulative effect of human labor in history is the establishment in the human consciousness and in actual life that man is a species being living in constant interaction with nature, a being unique in nature due to the distinctiveness of his labor:

> It is just in his work upon the objective world that man really proves himself as a *species-being*. This production is his active species-life. By means of it nature appears as *his* work and his reality.[48]

Through his labor man achieves sociality, a communal identity with his type. Marx denotes this sociality in the phrase "active species-life." That he can accede to his species being by his labor implies that man is a social being. Man likewise demonstrates and realizes his freedom from the limitations of natural necessity by his labor. Marx illustrates this point by comparing human and animal production:

> The practical construction of an *objective world*, the *manipulation* of inorganic nature, is the confirmation of man as a conscious species-being, i.e., a being who treats the species as his own being or himself as a species-being. Of course, animals also produce. They construct nests, dwellings, as in the case of bees, beavers, ants, etc. But they only produce what is strictly necessary for themselves or their young. They produce only in a single direction, while man produces universally. They produce only under the compulsion of direct physical needs, while man produces when he is free from physical need and only truly produces in freedom from such need. Animals produce only themselves, while man reproduces the whole of nature. The products of

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[48]Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

> animal production belong directly to their physical bodies, while man is free in the face of his product. Animals construct only in accordance with the standards and needs of the species to which they belong, while man knows how to produce in accordance with the standards of every species and how to apply the appropriate standard to the object. Thus man constructs also in accordance with the laws of beauty.[49]

The ultimate distinction between men and animals resides in the unique quality of human production. The general distinguishing feature is that man treats himself consciously as a species being. This means in concrete terms that man is conscious of method in production.[50] Animals produce but only what is strictly necessary for the maintenance of life. Natural necessity determines that character of their production. Man must indeed produce to meet the essentials for life, but he can do much more: he can act as an artist, as a creator in his production of objects. Man in being able to apprehend the general laws of nature can produce creatively above and beyond the demands of natural necessity. Man can alter his mode of production according to his increased comprehension of scientific laws. The animal does not possess this consciousness of method in his production and is accordingly limited to a rigid relationship with nature. The unique quality of human production carries with it that man is an inventor and user of tools. Creativity in production coincides with creativity in the invention of tools. T. D. Weldon asserts regarding Marx's concept of man that

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[49]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 128.

[50]Vernon Venable, *Human Nature: The Marxian View* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), pp. 67, 68.

> Man must be regarded, not as a fallen angel, but as a unique kind of animal; and his uniqueness lies quite simply in his ability to fabricate for himself productive tools. No special act of creation is therefore needed to explain how the present human situation has come about. All we need to think about are the means of production and the relationships, called productive relations, into which human beings have to enter in order to employ those means in an effective way.[51]

Man distinguishes himself from animals primarily by his manner of production.

That man accedes to his species being through the mediation of his labor connotes further that man himself determines the character of his species. As Marx puts it, "the object of labor is the objectification of man's species-life."[52] Objectification signifies more than the ability to invent and to construct ingenious objects for comfort and enjoyment. The fecundity of this concept means above all that man is conscious of his own self-creation. Man is self-consciously his own creator as Marx says:

> The object of labour is, therefore, the *objectification of man's species-life*; for he no longer reproduces himself merely intellectually, as in consciousness, but actively and in a real sense, and he sees his own reflection in a world which he has constructed.[53]

Thus productive life is preeminently the means of creating, transforming human life consciously. Man does not perform his unique function according to a predetermined or supernatural plan, but man alone willfully and

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[51]T. D. Weldon, "The Union of Theory and Practice," *Revue internationale de Philosophie*, XII (1958), 280.

[52]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

[53]*Ibid.*

consciously creates himself according to his own design. Man is thus unique in the sense that he alone is capable of changing his mode of production and consequently of transforming himself.

CHAPTER III

THE NOTION OF ALIENATION

Normally man realizes a fruitful relationship with nature through the mediation of his labor but according to Marx the relationship between man and nature loses its fecundity in history due to the disintegrating effects of human alienation. Through the course of human history this relationship is debilitated by the alienation of that activity which promises the maximum for human development, namely, human labor. Enfeebled in its efforts regarding the satisfaction of man's needs and in its goal of man's humanization, labor is no longer pregnant with creative possibilities for the advance of mankind. From this condition of alienation flow the multitude of other alienations in life, for example, intellectual, political, and religious alienation. Alienation pervades the whole of society, but in economic alienation the root of all human suffering is discovered. An understanding of Marx's concept of alienated labor is facilitated by perceiving how he viewed alienation in general and how he came to this position mainly through the influence of Hegel and Feuerbach.

Terminology

Marx employs two words, *Entäusserung* and *Entfremdung*, in elaborating his concept of alienation. No systematic distinction is made between these two terms in such a way that each represents a facet of the conception. Marx uses the words as a pair, as if doubling the concept

for rhetorical emphasis only. Some contemporary translators of Marx however attempt to make a significant distinction between these terms.

Martin Milligan who made the first English translation of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* argues, for example, that there is a distinction between these terms. His case is based largely on the etymological sense of the terms. Milligan comments on *entäussern* (p.p. *entäussert*; noun, *Entäusserung*):

> The ordinary dictionary meanings of *entäussern* are "to part with," "to renounce," "to cast off," "to sell," "to alienate" (a right, or one's property). The last of these best expresses the sense in which Marx usually uses this term. For "alienate" is the only English word which combines, in much the same way as does *entäussern*, the ideas of "losing" something which nevertheless remains in existence over-against one, of something passing from one's own into another's hands, as a result of one's own act, with the idea of "selling" something: that is to say, both "alienate" and *entäussern* have, at least as one possible meaning, the idea of a sale, a transference of ownership, which is simultaneously a renunciation. At the same time, the word *entäussern* has, more strongly than "alienate," the sense of "making external to oneself," and at times, when this has seemed to be the aspect of its meaning uppermost in the author's mind, the word "externalize" has been used to render it in English.[1]

Another writer, Daniel Bell, adopts a similar meaning of *Entäusserung* in his article, "The 'Rediscovery' of Alienation":

> *Entäusserung* implies the "externalization" of aspects of one's self, with the overtone that such externalization comes through the sale (in a legal-commercial sense) of one's labor. The product that one sells remains as an object independent of one's self, but one with which there is the two-fold sense of identification and loss.[2]

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[1]Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959). See translator's notes on p. 11.

[2]Daniel Bell, "The 'Rediscovery' of Alienation: Some Notes Along the Quest for the Historical Marx," *The Journal of Philosophy*, LVI, (November 19, 1959), 933.

Milligan and Bell substantially agree on the meaning of this first term.

Now the second term used by Marx is *entfremden* (p.p. *entfremdet*; noun: *Entfremdung*). Martin Milligan comments:

> The ordinary dictionary meanings for *entfremden* are "to estrange," "to alienate," but in the present volume "estrange" has always been used. The reason is not only that "alienate" was needed for *entäussern* (see above), but also that *entfremden* is only equivalent to "alienate" in *one* sense of the English word—in the sense in which we speak of two people being "alienated" or of someone's affections being "alienated." *Entfremden* has not the legal-commercial undertones of "alienate," and would not be used, for instance, to describe a transfer of property. Hence, despite the fact that translators of Marx have often rendered *entfremdet* as "alienated," "estranged" seems better, especially as Marx does also use *entäussert*, which *is* the equivalent of "alienated" in its legal-commercial sense.[3]

Daniel Bell's comments on *Entfremdung* parallel those of Martin Milligan. He remarks, "*Entfremdung* implies simple estrangement, or the detaching of one's self from another, of divorce."[4]

The most recent English translation of the *Manuscripts* was made by T. B. Bottomore who recognizes that Marx uses both *Entäusserung* and *Entfremdung* but also that he makes no significant distinction between them. Bottomore comments:

> On the other hand I have translated both *Entäusserung* and *Entfremdung* as "alienation" (or occasionally "estrangement") since Marx (unlike Hegel) does not make a systematic distinction between them; Marx distinguishes between *Entäusserung*, *Entfremdung* (alienation) and *Vergegenstandlichung* (objectification).[5]

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[3]Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, *op. cit.*, see translator's notes on pp. 11, 12.

[4]Daniel Bell, *op. cit.*

[5]Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964). See editor's "Introduction" on p. *xix*.

If Marx made a systematic distinction between the two terms, then this must be observed; but such is not the case according to Bottomore. An example from the text illustrates this viewpoint and illustrates how the two terms are apparently used for rhetorical purposes only. Marx's essay on "Die entfremdete Arbeit" in the first manuscript contains numerous expressions like this:

> Wir haben die Entfremdung der Arbeit, ihre Entäusserung als ein Faktum angenommen und dies Faktum analysiert. Wie, fragen wir nun, kömmt der Mensch dazu, seine Arbeit zu entäussern, zu entfremden?[6]

No apparent distinction is made by Marx between *Entfremdung* and *Entäusserung*. Neither Milligan nor Bell advance arguments showing that Marx used the terms to connote different aspects of the conception, and such a position would be necessary if the two terms had peculiar meanings. The one conception, alienation, is thus designated by either the English word "alienation" or "estrangement."

The Influence of Hegel and Feuerbach

The notion of alienation did not originate with Marx, but he significantly modified the conception to accommodate his realism. The influence which both Hegel and Feuerbach had in particular upon Marx illuminates what Marx is getting at in his own formulation.[7]

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[6]Karl Marx, *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte aus dem Jahre 1844* in *Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels: Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe* Abteilung I, Band III (Berlin: Marx-Engels Verlag, 1932), p. 93. My translation of this text is as follows: "We have taken the *estrangement* of labor, its *alienation*, as a fact, and we have analyzed this fact. How, we may ask, does man come to *alienate*, to *estrange*, his labor? [Italics are mine.]"

[7]For a more thorough treatment of the Hegelian and Feuerbachian

Marx adopts in general Hegel's sense of the term "alienation," but he rejects Hegel's application of the concept. In his earlier and more philosophical expressions Marx devotes a great deal of attention to criticism of Hegel. The object of this criticism is not to completely abandon Hegelianism but rather to correct it in certain respects, especially in regard to its application to life. The critique of Hegel's concept of alienation is in particular severe, yet it is clear from his argument in the "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy" that the semantic value of the term is retained.

> Hegel's *Encyclopedia* begins with logic, with *pure speculative thought*, and ends with *absolute knowledge*, the self-conscious and self-conceiving philosophical or absolute mind, i.e. the superhuman, abstract mind. The whole of the *Encyclopedia* is nothing but the extended being of the philosophical mind, its self-objectification; and the philosophical mind is nothing but the alienated world-mind thinking within the bounds of its self-alienation, i.e. conceiving itself in an abstract manner. *Logic* is the *money* of the mind, the speculative *thought-value* of man and nature, their essence indifferent to any real determinate character and thus unreal; *thought* which is *alienated* and abstract and ignores real nature and man. *The external character of this abstract thought . . . nature* as it exists for this abstract thought.

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influence on Marx's thought see the following: Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx* (New York: A John Day Book, 1936), 335 pp. (Dialectical materialism is the major concern here—no mention is made of alienation.); August Cornu, *The Origins of Marxian Thought* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publishers, 1957), 128 pp.; Robert C. Tucker, "Marxianism—Is It A Religion?", *Ethics*, LXVIII, (1958), 125-130; Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 263 pp., see chapters I-VI; Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1954), 439 pp., see Part I; Gustav A. Wetter, *Dialectical Materialism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), 609 pp., see chapters I, II.; Jean Hyppolite, *Etudes sur Marx et Hegel* (Paris: M. Rivière, 1955), 204 pp.

> Nature is external to it, loss of itself, and is only conceived as something external, as abstract thought, but alienated abstract thought. Finally, spirit, this thought which returns to its own origin and which, as anthropological, phenomenological, psychological, customary, artistic-religious spirit, is not valid for itself until it discovers itself and relates itself to itself as absolute knowledge in the absolute (i.e. abstract) spirit, and so receives its conscious and fitting existence. For its real mode of existence is *abstraction*.
>
> Hegel commits a double error. The first appears most clearly in the *Phenomenology*, the birthplace of his philosophy. When Hegel conceives wealth, the power of the state, etc. as entities alienated from the human being, he conceives them only in their thought form. They are entities of thought and thus simply an alienation of *pure* (i.e. abstract) philosophical thought. The whole movement, therefore, ends in absolute knowledge.[8]

Marx does not here argue against the notion of alienation but rather against the relegation of this concept to abstract thought which is the thought of the abstract spirit. This misconception Marx calls a "mystification" in Hegel.[9] For instance he argues in this vein regarding Hegel's use of alienation in *The Phenomenology of Mind*.

> The *human character* of nature, of historically produced nature, of man's products, is shown by their being *products* of abstract mind, and thus phases of *mind, entities of thought*. The *Phenomenology* is a concealed, unclear and mystifying criticism, but in so far as it grasps the *alienation* of man (even though man appears only as mind) *all* the elements of criticism are contained in it, and are often *presented* and *worked out* in a manner which goes far beyond Hegel's own point of view. The sections devoted to the "unhappy consciousness," the "honest consciousness," the struggle between the "noble" and the "base" consciousness, etc., etc. contain the *critical* elements (though still in an alienated form) of whole areas such as religion, the state, civil life, etc.[10]

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[8]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 199, 200.

[9]Karl Marx & F. Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), p. 4.

[10]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 201, 202.

Hegelianism had value for Marx albeit in a concealed, inverted or mystified form. The "latent content" of the Hegelian concept, as Tucker describes it, had but to be brought into full light.[11] To make manifest the truth which Hegel put in a mystified form was the object of Marx's criticism of Hegel. What this transformation of Hegel actually meant will become clearer when Feuerbach's influence upon Marx is clarified below.

Hegel's concept was defective to Marx because it was dominated by the "Absolute Idea"—it had the fundamental defect of being a mystification.[12] In other words, Hegelianism viewed man as a determination of this "Absolute Idea" whereas for Marx man is the subject, and consciousness is a determination of man. In his *The Holy Family* for instance, Marx advances a critique of Hegel which enlightens his viewpoint:

> As Hegel here puts *self-consciousness* in the place of *man*, the *most varied* human reality appears only as a *definite* form, as a *determination of self-consciousness*. But a mere determination of self-consciousness is a "*pure category*", a mere "thought" which I can consequently also abolish in "pure" thought and overcome through pure thought. . . . Thus the whole destructive work results in the *most conservative philosophy* because it thinks it has overcome the *objective world*, the sensuously real world, by merely transforming it into a "thing of thought" mere *determination* of *self-consciousness* and can therefore dissolve its opponent, which has become *ethereal*, in the "*ether of pure thought*." Phenomenology is therefore quite logical when in the end it replaces human reality by "*Absolute Knowledge*"—*Knowledge*, because this is the only mode of existence of self-consciousness, because self-consciousness is considered as the

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[11]Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 82, 96.

[12]*Ibid.*, p. 98.

> only mode of existence of man; *absolute* knowledge for the very reason that self-consciousness knows *itself alone* and is no more disturbed by an objective world. Hegel makes man *the man of self-consciousness* instead of making self-consciousness the *self-consciousness of man,* of real man, man living in a real objective world and determined by that world. He stands the world *on its head* and can therefore dissolve *in the head* all the limitations which naturally remain in existence for *evil sensuousness,* for real man. . . .The whole of *Phenomenology* is intended to prove that *self-consciousness* is the *only reality* and *all reality.*[13]

Marx transforms the Hegelian concept by postulating man as the subject rather than the "Absolute Idea." To make this reversal in Hegel is to remove the mystification from his system. The consequence is that man is alienated and not the "Absolute Idea." He emphasizes this aspect of this transformation of Hegel in "The Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy":

> It is quite understandable that a living, natural being endowed with objective (i.e. material) faculties should have *real natural objects* of its being, and equally that its self-alienation should be the establishment of a *real,* objective world, but in the form of *externality,* as a world which does not belong to, and dominates, its being. There is nothing incomprehensible or mysterious about this. The converse, rather, would be mysterious.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> When real, corporeal *man,* with his feet firmly planted on the solid ground, inhaling and exhaling all the powers of nature, *posits* his real objective faculties, as a result of his alienation, as alien objects, the positing is not the subject of this act but the subjectivity of objective faculties whose action must also, therefore, *be objective.*[14]

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[13]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956), pp. 253, 254.

[14]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.,* pp. 205, 206.

The mystification in Hegel is removed according to Marx by situating alienation in human activity. The outcome of this transformation of Hegel is that changes occur in the actual patterns of life when this condition of alienation is finally remedied under communism.[15]

Marx likewise adopts with modification from Hegel the distinction between 'essence' and 'existence' as significant constituents of the meaning of alienation. Marx in turn inverts or removes the mystification from these concepts in order that man in his real life situations is in view and not an abstract consciousness as in the case of Hegel. For Hegel "a consciousness which projects its substance outside itself, or in other words exteriorizes itself is alienated. In a vain attempt to reach this myth which it has projected outside itself, whether in the form of a god or any other, human consciousness becomes unhappy."[16] Hegel portrays "the journey of consciousness looking for itself."[17] There is ultimately the identification of consciousness or "of the Self with the Absolute."[18] Alienation means that the 'self' is not what it ought to be and accordingly strives to be what it could be, or 'essence' and 'existence' are estranged and move toward a reconciliation. In Hegel's conception, "alienation . . . was the radical disassociation of the 'self' into both actor and thing, into a *subject* that strives to control

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[15]Marx's concept of overcoming alienation is developed in detail in Chapter V, "Labor—Self-realization for All."

[16]Wilfred Desan, *The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 28.

[17]*Ibid.*

[18]*Ibid.*

its own fate, and an *object* which is manipulated by others."[19] Alienation was an ontological fact woven into the very fabric of life.[20]

Marx accepts the Hegelian theory that all development has a dialectical character, but he shows that "its basic error is to represent the Idea as a genuine reality."[21] Alienation remains in Hegel a matter of consciousness and thus unreal. The struggle for the reconciliation of essence and existence for Marx is a struggle of real men in their material productive relations. The human essence is that abiding quality in man which distinguishes him as man, namely the quality of producing material objects freely, consciously, and creatively. Human existence is that particular expression of the human essence prevalent in a particular society. In other words, essence is man's essential nature or species determination while existence is the historical and consequently changing manifestation of the human essence.[22] Essence in this sense denotes the unity of being, its identity throughout change. This means, in terms of alienation, that man "is not what he potentially is."[23] That is, man in his historical encounter exists as something which does not accord with what man essentially is. What counts for Marx in alienation "is not a speculative dialectic reason, but an analysis of

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[19]Daniel Bell, *op. cit.*, p. 936. [20]*Ibid.*, p. 937

[21]Gustav A. Wetter. *Dialectical Materialism*, trans. P. Heath (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 26.

[22]Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961), p. 30.

[23]*Ibid.*, p. 47.

the actual relationship of opposite forces within the social order."[24] Alienation is accordingly given a social context and is tied to an historical condition that can be changed. The transcendence or overcoming of alienation is initiated by the efforts of the proletariat who establishes a new social order that permits the reconciliation of human essence and existence. This comes about through the liberation of labor practices from the system of private property.[25] The details of this Marxian perspective are developed in subsequent chapters.

It was Feuerbach's critique and initial transformation of Hegel that suggested to Marx the value of the Hegelian system. Marx lauded Feuerbach's contribution as the most significant appraisal to emerge in the post-Hegelian tradition. Feuerbach gave him, he says, the insight to expose the hidden truth in Hegelianism.

> Feuerbach is the only person who has a *serious* and *critical* relation to Hegel's dialectic, who has made real discoveries in this field, and above all, who has vanquished the old philosophy. The magnitude of Feuerbach's achievement and the unassuming simplicity with which he presents his work to the world are in striking contrast with the behaviour of others.
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> Feuerbach's great achievement is—
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> 1. to have shown that philosophy is nothing more than religion brought into thought and developed by thought, and that it is equally to be condemned as another form and mode of existence of human alienation;
> 2. to have founded *genuine materialism* and *positive science* by making the social relationship of "man to man" the basic principle of his theory;
> 3. to have opposed to the negation of the negation which claims to be the absolute positive, a self-subsistent principle positively founded on itself.[26]

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[24]Wilfred Desan, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

[25]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[26]*Ibid.*, p. 197.

Feuerbach's location of alienation in the human was the perception required to remove the mystification from Hegel.

Essentially, Feuerbach naturalized or humanized Hegelianism by showing that "the actual psychological fact reflected darkly in the Hegelian metaphysics of self-alienated spirit is the fact of man's self-alienation in the religious consciousness of himself as God."[27] Alienation for Feuerbach "points to the unnatural situation of the individual who has built for himself a visionary world of abstractions and dwells in that empyrean of dreams instead of facing reality as it is."[28] Man embodies, as it were, each of his main faculties in a Superior Being and deems himself to be by contrast weak and powerless. "This conception of a Being which exists at a great distance in all the splendor of his isolation results in alienation for man."[29] Feuerbach's solution is for man to affirm that man is God for himself, but alienation and its removal remained as a matter of consciousness, albeit human consciousness. Feuerbach's application of Hegel's system to the human however suggested to Marx how Hegel could be transformed into a realistic account of life even though Feuerbach's attempt did not fully achieve the humanization of Hegel.

The critique by Feuerbach was inadequate in Marx's estimation because alienation was confined to human consciousness and also because

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[27]Robert C. Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[28]Wilfred Desan, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[29]*Ibid.*, p. 29.

the cure for this condition left unaltered the material conditions of men. He nevertheless acclaimed the Feuerbachian contribution, for "the criticism of religion, he declared in it, is the beginning of all criticism. It culminates in the precept that man is the supreme being for man. By exposing the God-illusion, it frees man to revolve around himself as his real sun."[30] In Marx's own words, "Religion is only the illusory sun about which man revolves so long as he does not revolve about himself."[31] Feuerbach then centered the problem in man but failed to see that alienation applied to the whole man and not merely to his religious consciousness. Marx succinctly summarizes his critique of Feuerbach's concept of alienation in the fourth and the seventh of his *Theses on Feuerbach*.

> (IV) Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-estrangement, of the duplication of the world into a religious and a secular one. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis. But that the secular basis raises itself above and establishes for itself an independent realm in the clouds can be explained only through the cleavage and self-contradictions within this secular basis. The latter must therefore in itself be both understood in its contradiction and revolutionized in practice. Therefore after, e.g., the earthly family is discovered to be the secret of the heavenly family, one must proceed to destroy the former both in theory and in practice.
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> (VII) Feuerbach therefore does not see that the "religious temperament" itself is a social product and that the abstract individual whom he analyses belongs to a particular form of society.[32]

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[30]Robert C. Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

[31]Karl Marx, "Contribution To The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 144.

[32]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, pp. 198, 199.

Feuerbach then brought the concept of alienation into the human sphere but erred in confining it only to a matter of consciousness.

Alienation is also viewed by Marx as a form of idolatry which man ought to rid himself of if he is to achieve a freedom that accords with his essence. By linking alienation with idolatry, Marx stands in the tradition of Western thought according to Erich Fromm.[33] Fromm notes that alienation found its first expression in the Old Testament concept of idolatry and that this link between alienation and idolatry was prevalent in thinkers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who criticized their age for "its increasing rigidity, emptiness, and deadness."[34] Hegel, Feuerbach, and Marx drew upon this tradition. The Marxian analysis of and solution for alienation accounts for a major portion of his theoretical expressions.

Marx then took over the notion of alienation from Hegel's speculations and from Feuerbach's applications of those speculations. Alienation for Marx was an enormous source of grief, far surpassing that of the unhappy consciousness. Marx was particularly wary of all abstractions as represented in the Hegelian dialectic. Desan comments on Marx's reason for rejecting Hegelian abstractions:

> This is too remote for Marx, for whom alienation immediately takes a concrete form; to define means to diversify, and alienation is either intellectual, economic, or political. Something which can be pinned down can be more easily removed,

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[33]Erich Fromm, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-47

[34]*Ibid.*, p. 46.

> and this removal of alienations, one by one, becomes the concrete form of man's earthly combat against all suffering.[35]

Alienation plays a prominent role in Marx's *Weltanshauung*, and as subsequent parts of this investigation disclose Marx situates alienation in the labor process, in the actual economic relations of society.

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[35]Wilfred Desan, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

CHAPTER IV

LABOR—THE DILEMMA OF CURRENT EXISTENCE

The generative idea which distinguished Marx's perspective from the philosophers of his time was his locating man's alienation in the human labor process.[1] His most systematic treatment of this idea occurs in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844.*[2] An investigation of alienated labor in this early writing discloses the essentials of this salient concept. There are three manuscripts of which the first bears directly on alienated labor. It has four sections: "Wages of Labor," "Profit of Capital," "Rent of Land," and "Alienated Labor." The first three sections are composed largely of direct quotes from economic theorists who had dealt with the problems suggested by these first three sections.[3] His object in citing these works at length is description of the alienated condition of man, not in his own words but in the words of other theorists who failed to see the plight of the worker as he saw it. He summarizes in the last section of the first manuscript what he believes

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[1]Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 123.

[2]Marx's most systematic treatment of alienated labor is found in these manuscripts. They are among some of his more philosophical expressions: see Karl Marx, *Early Writings,* trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore with a foreword by Erich Fromm (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), 277 pp.

[3]T. B. Bottomore identifies the author and source of these numerous quotations in Karl Marx, *Early Writings,* trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), see editor's footnotes on pp. 69, 78, 81, 82, 85, 98, 99.

is the effect of quoting from these political economists, and in so doing he commences the development of his philosophical conception of alienation.

> We have begun from the presuppositions of political economy. We have accepted its terminology and its laws. We presupposed private property; the separation of labour, capital and land, as also of wages, profit and rent; the division of labour; competition; the concept of exchange value, etc. From political economy itself, in its own words, we have shown that the worker sinks to the level of a commodity, and to a most miserable commodity; that the misery of the worker increases with the power and volume of his production; that the necessary result of competition is the accumulation of capital in a few hands, and thus a restoration of monopoly in a more terrible form; and finally that the distinction between capitalist and land lord, and between agricultural labourer and industrial worker, must disappear, and the whole of society divide into the two classes of property *owners* and *propertyless* workers.[4]

Quoting these political economists shows according to Marx that the worker has been reduced to merchandise, to a most wretched kind of merchandise. The disastrous consequence of this miserable condition is the division of the whole of society into capitalists and laborers, i.e. "property *owners* and *propertyless* workers."[5]

The chief criticism leveled against these political economists by Marx is that their analysis of conditions in society did not penetrate to the fundamental cause of the worker's plight. The shallowness of these theories is due to the fact that they begin their analysis with a myth of the primitive past, and this myth is Adam Smith's assertion that the tendency to barter is a primitive and fundamental human quality.

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[4]Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 120.

[5]*Ibid.*

> Let us not begin our explanation, as does the economist, from a legendary primordial condition. Such a primordial condition does not explain anything; it merely removes the question into a grey and nebulous distance. It asserts as a fact or event what it should deduce, namely, the necessary relation between two things; for example, between the division of labour and exchange. In the same way theology explains the origin of evil by the fall of man; that is, it asserts as a historical fact what it should explain.[6]

A more basic and realistic fact must be discovered as a starting point if a true account of social life is to be formulated.

The fact to begin with, says Marx, is a contemporary fact whose description can be discovered in the writings of these theorizers. This fact is the alienation of human labor which is manifested in the fundamental situation of man's devaluation, of his reduction to a commodity.

> We shall begin from a *contemporary* economic fact. The worker becomes poorer the more wealth he produces and the more his production increases in power and extent. The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more goods he creates. The *devaluation* of the human world increases in direct relation with the *increase in value* of the world of things. Labour does not only create goods; it also produces itself and the worker as a *commodity*, and indeed in the same proportion as it produces goods.[7]

The devalorization of human labor thus means for Marx the depreciation of all humanity.

Capitalistic Economic Production

The Marxian insight that man is reduced to a commodity is advanced within the specific context of capitalistic economic production as he

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[6]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 121.

[7]*Ibid.*

witnessed it. Marx's description and analysis of capitalism indicate that he realized how profoundly society was being affected by the forces involved. His treatment of this phenomenon includes a note of optimism for the good it promises to mankind. He lauds, for example, the attainments of the bourgeoisie in the *Manifesto:*

> The bourgeoisie . . . has been the first to show what man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals.[8]

On the other hand, great sections of the first volume of *Capital* are given over to moving accounts of the dreadful effects of capitalistic economic production on the lives of multitudes of workers. These accounts are based for the most part on the findings of official English government factory inspectors, whose careful work Marx greatly respected and valued.[9]

The rapid progress in technology before and during Marx's day accelerated the transformation of older patterns of production. Steam was a new source of power which coupled with the invention of working machines progressively replaced the craftsman. Ryazanoff comments on this development:

> The industrial revolution, the result of which was the replacement of capitalistic manufacture by large-scale production, was brought about by the invention of new machinery towards the

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[8]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. I (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), p. 37.

[9]For example, see Marx's comments on the situation in the tile industry in *Capital,* Vol. I (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), pp. 507, 508; or his comments on the lace industry, pp. 510-514.

> end of the eighteenth century. England led the way, and broadly speaking we may say that this revolution did not end before the first half of the nineteenth century. It began with a number of discoveries and inventions, above all in the realms of cattle-breeding, agriculture, mining, textile production, and transport. The initial impetus was given by the elaboration of what is called the working machine; by the replacement of the craftsman's tools, or of manufacturing labour, by such working machines.[10]

The introduction of working machines required at the same time a reorganization of the productive process. The skill of the craftsman was built into a series of machines each of which performed a single part in the process of producing a finished commodity. The laborer simply regulated and facilitated the efficient performance of these machines. This is the factory system of which Marx comments in *Capital* I:

> In handicrafts and manufacture, the workman makes use of a tool, in the factory, the machine makes use of him. There the movements of the instrument of labour proceed from him, here it is the movements of the machine that he must follow. In manufacture the workmen are parts of a living mechanism. In the factory we have a lifeless mechanism independent of the workman, who becomes its mere living appendage.[11]

Technological progress likewise revolutionized agriculture such that it "dealt a decisive blow to old-fashioned methods of agriculture. It uprooted the peasant from the deadening conditions of rural life."[12] There began to appear "a new type of large-scale farmer, substantially

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[10]D. Ryazanoff, *The Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1963), p. 75.

[11]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), pp. 461, 462.

[12]D. Ryazanoff, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

an industrial capitalist."[13] The general effect in production was the rapid conquest of nature by man.

This revolution in the mode of production was accompanied by a similar revolution in transportation and communication. Marx writes in *Capital* I:

> The revolution in the modes of production of industry and agriculture made necessary a revolution in the general conditions of the social process of production, i.e., in the means of communication and transport.[14]

Both the steamboat and the steam locomotive were in use to meet the demands of mass production for more and more raw materials and for mass distribution of manufactured products.[15] The electric telegraph was universally introduced as a means of quick communication to satisfy the needs of the world market and to keep pace with the activity of its development.[16]

Competition was accordingly heightened at this time due to increased productivity and the general acceptance of a *laissez-faire* policy in trade.[17] With the stiffening of competition came the growth of exchange, of financial institutions to accommodate the sale of commodities. The massive accumulation of capital on the part of a few began to mark the

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[13]D. Ryazanoff, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

[14]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

[15]D. Ryazanoff, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

[16]*Ibid.*, p. 88

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 83.

distribution of wealth.[18] This system spread and a world market was developed.[19] The growth of the world market set capitalism as a revolutionary force with world wide significance.

A rapid displacement of established social patterns characterized this period of capitalistic economic production. The progressive changes in the mode of production alone produced unprecedented movements of people from one location to another. Marx comments on the heightened mobility of workers:

> Modern Industry never looks upon and treats the existing form of a process as final. The technical basis of that industry is therefore revolutionary, while all earlier modes of production were essentially conservative. . . . At the same time, it thereby also revolutionizes the division of labor within the society, and incessantly launches masses of capital and of work-people from one branch of production to another.[20]

This productive system likewise alters the character of the laboring force. Instead of one adult worker by his labor providing his family with food, under this system the whole family is swept into the factory and put to work:

> In so far as machinery dispenses with muscular power, it becomes a means of employing labourers of slight muscular strength, and those whose bodily development is incomplete, but whose limbs are all the more supple. The labour of women and children was, therefore, the first thing sought for by capitalists who used machinery.[21]

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[18] D. Ryazanoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-93.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 85.

[20] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, pp. 532, 533.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 431.

The workers also unite over the common concern for higher wages. These enlarging combinations of workers Marx calls the "proletariat."[22] These associations at times took on a political character as in the case of the Paris Commune.[23] The disruption of old established farming practices and the shifting of multitudes from the rural to urban centers produced cleavages between town and country of which Marx writes:

> The foundation of every division of labour that is well developed, and brought about by the exchange of commodities, is the separation between town and country. It may be said, that the whole economical history of society is summed up in the movement of this antithesis.[24]

In England and Wales, for example, the urban population increased at unprecedented rates during the nineteenth century.[25]

The culmination of capitalistic economic production began to disclose its pernicious aspects during this era when money became the measure of all things.

> Everything becomes saleable and buyable. . . . Just as every qualitative difference between commodities is extinguished in money, so money, on its side, like the radical leveller that it is, does away with all distinctions.[26]

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[22]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* in *Selected Works*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

[23]Marx's sympathetic evaluation of the historical significance of the Paris Commune is advanced in *The Civil War in France* in *Selected Works*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, pp. 473-545.

[24]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 387.

[25]D. Ryazanoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 90, 91.

[26]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

Man's alienation is therefore more thorough-going, more complete under capitalism than that of the serf who preceded him in the arena of history.[27] Kamenka summarizes Marx's evaluation of this period as follows: "The final flowering of alienation was capitalism."[28]

Alienated Labor

Marx situates human alienation in the labor process, and alienated labor in his view accounts for all other alienations in life. This devalorization of human life means in more precise terms that alienated labor separates man i) from his product, ii) from his natural activity, iii) from his species being and nature, iv) from other men.

That alienated labor separates man from his product, the object of production, means for Marx that the results of labor do not contribute to human self-realization but rather only to human bondage and suffering. The fact of alienated labor, he says, "simply implies that the object produced by labor, its product, now stands opposed to it as an *alien being*, as a *power independent* of the producer."[29] What the product of labor signifies assists in understanding the import of this statement. The product of labor is defined as "labour which has been embodied in an object and turned into a physical thing, this product is an *objectification*

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[27]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 16-68.

[28]Eugene Kamenka, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 151.

[29]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 122.

of labour."[30] This definition emphasizes the fact that products have a human as well as a material quality to them. Products are indeed material but more importantly for Marx is the fact that they embody something of man himself—they are, as it were, an incarnation of man. The objects that man produces are concrete embodiments of personal power. The term "objectification" carries for Marx this same notion, i.e., that human powers are in some way congealed in the products of labor. Normally the objectification of labor results in the self-development of man, but alienated labor means that man objectifies himself in an inhuman manner and that "the objects into which the alienated activity is materialized confront him as alien beings."[31]

Marx lists in the *Manuscripts* three consequences which according to him follow directly from the separation of the worker from his product and which reinforce by way of illustration the contention that the product of labor confronts the worker as an alien and hostile power. These consequences are manifested in the following situations.

> The performance of work appears in the sphere of political economy as a *vitiation* of the worker, objectification as a *loss* and as *servitude to the object*, and appropriation as *alienation*.
> So much does the performance of work appear as vitiation that the worker is vitiated to the point of starvation. So much does objectification appear as loss of the object that the worker is deprived of the most essential things not only of life but also of work. Labour itself becomes an object which he can acquire only by the greatest effort and with unpredictable interruptions. So much does the appropriation

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[30]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

[31]Robert C. Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

> of the object appear as alienation that the more objects the worker produces the fewer he can possess and the more he falls under the domination of his product, of capital.
>
> All these consequences follow from the fact that the worker is related to the *product of his labour* as to an *alien* object.[32]

The term "appropriation" in this quote means taking from nature material objects with a view to transforming them into a product of labor. In terms of the consequences of alienated labor this means that man is alienated from nature when he is separated from his product. An increase of work within the context of capitalistic production means an increasing dehumanization of the worker. Marx elucidates this claim by drawing an analogy from what happens in religious alienation. Feuerbach's concept of alienation is doubtless in view here even though his name is not mentioned.

> For it is clear on this presupposition that the more the worker expends himself in work the more powerful becomes the world of objects which he creates in face of himself, the poorer he becomes in his inner life, and the less he belongs to himself. It is just the same as in religion. The more of himself man attributes to God the less he has left in himself. The worker puts his life into the object, and his life then belongs no longer to himself but to the object. The greater his activity, therefore, the less he possesses. What is embodied in the product of his labour is no longer his own. The greater this product is, therefore, the more he is diminished. The *alienation* of the worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, assumes an *external* existence, but that it exists independently, *outside himself*, and alien to him, and that it stands opposed to him as an autonomous power. The life which he has given to the object sets itself against him as an alien and hostile force.[33]

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[32]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*

[33]*Ibid.*, pp. 122, 123.

The suggestion here is that the object of production taken as an alien object imposes a limit or a fetter on man. It limits him in much the same way that religion dispossesses him. Just as religion is a bondage to man likewise the object of labor is a bondage for him. Since the worker's life is embodied in this object, the more he produces, within the context of capitalism, the greater is his loss of life by himself to a hostile power.

After showing that the devalorization of man in one respect means that alienated labor separates man from his product, Marx examines more closely what he considers to be a significant feature of this phenomenon, namely, objectification. His analysis notes in the first place that the worker is a natural being and that as such he "can create nothing without nature, withoug the *sensuous external world.*"[34] This view portrays man as a being of necessity in that he is dependent on nature for his labor, for Marx says that the external world "is the material in which his labour is realized, in which it is active, out of which and through which it produces things."[35] This dependency on nature has a dual significance in that "just as nature affords the *means of existence* of labour, in the sense that labour cannot *live* without objects upon which it can be exercised, so also it provides the *means of existence* in a narrow sense; namely, the means of physical existence for the *worker* himself."[36] In

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[34]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp.122, 123.

[35]*Ibid.*

[36]*Ibid.*, p. 123.

the capitalistic context the more man works, objectifies himself in his products, the more he deprives himself of a fruitful bond with nature. The consequences of his appropriation of nature under alienated labor are twofold:

> Thus, the more the worker *appropriates* the external world of sensuous nature by his labour the more he deprives himself of *means of existence,* in two respects: *first,* that the sensuous external world becomes progressively less an object belonging to his labour or a means of existence of his labour, and *secondly,* that it becomes progressively less a means of existence in the direct sense, a means for the physical subsistence of the worker.[37]

Nature then becomes progressively alien to man even to provide for physical livelihood. The objects he produces become his master and he their slave instead of their becoming an expression of his self-realization, his mastery over nature. Marx describes the severity of human bondage by saying, "The culmination of this enslavement is that he can only maintain himself as a *physical subject* so far as he is a *worker,* and that it is only as a *physical subject* that he is a worker."[38]

The worker's production should permit the parallel creation of the worker as a human and the product as the objectification of his being, but the estrangement of labor reverses this development. Objectification in this sense is degrading to man since the objects of his creation confront him as a disintegrating and hostile force. The history of objectification or externalization for Marx is a history of man's

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[37]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.,* p. 123.

[38]*Ibid.*

self-alienation. He creates objects that, instead of being a means of humanization, daily reinforce his regression to animality. "Man in history reifies himself in an objective world of material things. . . . What makes the man-created world alien and hostile is not its objectivity, but rather the fact that man, in the act of producing it, objectifies himself inhumanly, in opposition to himself."[39]

As a natural being man lives, says Marx, in transaction with the external world and creates objects which express and affirm his creative faculties. In this transaction man is the acting subject and the produced goods the object of his activity. That man objectifies himself in the object of labor is affirmation that man is an objective being:

> An objective being acts objectively, and it would not act objectively if objectivity were not part of its essential being. It creates and establishes *only objects, because* it is established by objects, and because it is fundamentally natural.[40]

As an objective, natural being man objectifies himself in the objects of production and these objects are the actual nature of man according to Marx:

> Nature, as it develops in human history, in the act of genesis of human society, is the *actual* nature of man; thus nature as it develops through industry, though in an *alienated* form, is truly *anthropological* nature.[41]

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[39] Robert C. Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

[40] Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, pp. 206, 207.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 164.

The conception of anthropological nature as the self-externalization of man is a metaphysical assumption in Marx's perspective. Accordingly, the world of produced objects signify that products are not simply material objects but that they embody human powers.

This disruptive split between man the acting subject and his products, the object, connotes alienation for Marx. This split is a loss of man by himself, for his own productive activity creates the product, a manifestation of his nature, only to have this part of his manifest nature severed from him and reappear as an alien, hostile power to devitalize man. This loss of self in the object is a frustrating enactment, for instead of upgrading his humanity the object thwarts him in each effort at production. Marx discovers that the consequences of this rupture between man and his product are adequately described by the classical economists:

> The alienation of the worker in his object is expressed as follows in the laws of political economy: the more the worker produces the less he has to consume; the more value he creates the more worthless he becomes; the more refined his product the more crude and mis-shapen the worker; the more civilized the product the more barbarous the worker; the more powerful the work the more feeble the worker; the more the work manifests intelligence the more the worker declines in intelligence and becomes a slave of nature.[42]

Alienated labor further exhibits itself to Marx as a dialectic of opposing forces. The classical economists are criticized for not examining these obvious and meaningful contradictions:

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[42]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 123, 124.

> Political economy conceals the alienation in the nature of labour in so far as it does not examine the direct relationship between the worker (work) and production. Labour certainly produces marvels for the rich but it produces privation for the worker. It produces palaces, but hovels for the worker. It produces beauty, but deformity for the worker. It replaces labour by machinery, but it casts some of the workers back into a barbarous kind of work and turns others into machines. It produces intelligence, but also stupidity and cretinism for the workers.
>
> The direct relationship of labour to its products is the relationship of the worker to the objects of his production.[43]

This accordingly shows the dissimulation of the capitalist system which while favoring the promotion of the object against that of the worker ruins the dignity of the worker and of human labor.

The second aspect of the meaning of alienated labor is that it separates man from his natural activity, that is his free and conscious activity of appropriating nature through labor. This alienation is closely linked to the first component which is that the worker is separated from his product. In this assertion Marx only contends that they should be linked together without advancing arguments that convincingly connect them. He does however give reasons why the activity itself is another case of alienation.

Three reasons are given by him as to how alienated labor separates man from his natural activity. In the first place labor is external to the worker or it is separated from him as though it were not his own. Labor is accordingly repulsive to him because it does not accord with what man is—it is an activity unbecoming and degrading to one whose nature is to be free. As Marx explains:

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[43]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 124.

> What constitutes the alienation of labour? First, that the work is *external* to the worker, that it is not part of his nature; and that, consequently, he does not fulfil himself in his work but denies himself, has a feeling of misery rather than well-being, does not develop freely his mental and physical energies but is physically exhausted and mentally debased. The worker, therefore, feels himself at home only during his leisure time, whereas at work he feels homeless.[44]

The frustrations which accompany the worker's own efforts in labor manifest his alienation. The second reason that alienated labor separates man from his natural activity is that his labor is forced—it is not voluntary. His efforts are not directly identified with the satisfaction of a personal need, other than that of mere existence as a worker, but his efforts are designed by others primarily as a means to satisfy the needs of another. The baseness of satisfying the needs of others lies not so much in the fact that others benefit from his labor but rather that the initiative to labor and the corresponding benefit to others do not proceed from the will of the worker—the activity and its product are involuntarily extracted from him. The laborer becomes a mere "tool" or a means at the disposal of another. Labor under these conditions is inhuman, a loss of self:

> His work is not voluntary but imposed, *forced labor*. It is not the satisfaction of a need but only a means for satisfying other needs. Its alien character is clearly shown by the fact that as soon as there is no physical or other compulsion it is avoided like the plague. External labour, labour in which man alienates himself, is a labour of self-sacrifice, of mortification.[45]

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[44]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 124, 125.

[45]*Ibid.*, p. 125.

Man acts humanly only when he willingly deploys his energies in production without the coercion of external pressures. Marx's third reason for alienated activity is that labor actually belongs to another person. This means for Marx that labor dispossesses the worker of his individuality:

> Finally, the external character of work for the worker is shown by the fact that it is not his own work but work for someone else, that in work he does not belong to himself but to another person.[46]

In all, the worker acts under the influence of a hostile power which transforms his efforts into an estranged activity that carries with it the loss of his individuality.

The far-reaching effect of the alienation of work activity, Marx concludes, is that the worker is debased to an animal level of existence. He illuminates this conclusion by employing an analogy from religious alienation:

> Just as in religion the spontaneous activity of human fantasy, of the human brain and heart, reacts independently as an alien activity of gods or devils upon the individual, so the activity of the worker is not his own spontaneous activity. It is another's activity and a loss of his own spontaneity.
>
> We arrive at the result that man (the worker) feels himself to be freely active only in his animal functions—eating, drinking and procreating, or at most also in his dwelling and in personal adornment—while in his human functions he is reduced to an animal. The animal becomes human and the human becomes animal.
>
> Eating, drinking and procreating are of course also genuine human functions. But abstractly considered, apart from the environment of human activities, and turned into final and sole ends, they are animal functions.[47]

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[46] Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 125.

[47] *Ibid.*

Just as religion is the human production of an overpowering god which carries with it the loss of individuality, so alienated labor is the creation of hostile powers that debilitate man. Marx held that the human has distinctive qualities above those of animals; therefore, his rightful dignity is suppressed to animality. Man's freedom is restricted to an animal level of production. Alienated labor in this respect then stands as a self-decimating activity for the worker since it intends the production, but not *his* production, of a product.

The alienation of the worker in the performance of his work is described by Marx as "self-alienation." This facet of alienation is a deeply *personal* thing in that it is an *estrangement of individual powers* which strengthens the capitalist but *enfeebles* the laborer. All the power possessed by the capitalist he receives from the worker. The worker in a capitalist society creates and empowers his own enemy by a loss of himself.

> This is the relationship of the worker to his own activity as something alien and not belonging to him, activity as suffering (passivity), strength as powerless, creation as emasculation, the *personal* physical and mental energy of the worker, his personal life (for what is life but activity?), as an activity which is directed against himself, independent of him and not belonging to him. This is *self-alienation* as against the above-mentioned alienation of the *thing*.[48]

The intensely personal nature of this manifestation of human devalorization accounts for Marx's distinction between "self-alienation" and the "alienation of the thing." Man indeed sees a loss of self in the product,

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[48]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

fact is obvious if the same transition of an commodity and money entails alienation of use-rent of individuals, as illustrated upon by the situation of motion powers that individuals sell. Thus, [illegible] the human has distinctive qualities that human [illegible] this individual [illegible] is suppressed in economics. Marx [illegible] a [illegible] social level of production. Alienation [illegible] a [illegible] as a self-sustaining activity [illegible] the worker alone is [illegible] production, but not the production of a product.

The alienation of the worker in the performance of his work is described by Marx as "self-alienation." This level of alienation is a deeper element going in that it is an alienation of individual power which arrangement the capitalist has exploited the labourer. All the power possessed by the capitalist be derived from the worker. The worker is a capitalist labour creates and supports his own [illegible] of a loss of finality.

> This is the relationship of the worker to his own activity as something alien and not belonging to him, activity as suffering (passivity), strength as powerlessness, creation as castration, the personal physical and mental energy of the worker, his personal life (for what is life but activity?), as an activity which is directed against himself, independent of him and not belonging to him. This is self-alienation as against the above-mentioned alienation of the thing.

The intensity (economic nature) of this manifestation is based upon alienation resulting for Marx's conception between "self-alienation" and the "alienation of the thing". The labourer sees a loss of self in the product,

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[illegible]

but the loss of individuality in the activity itself has a more subjective quality about it. It must be noted here that the term "self-alienation" is not used exclusively by Marx to denote the alienation of the activity, for he also uses it as a summation of all that alienated labor represents.

The estrangement of man in labor means in the third place that alienated labor separates man from his species being and from nature. This is inferred by Marx from the two previous meanings of alienated labor.

> We have now to infer a third characteristic of *alienated labor* from the two we have considered.
> . . . . . .
> Thus alienated labor turns the *species-life of man,* and also nature as his mental species-property, into an *alien* being and into a *means* for his *individual existence.* It alienates from man his own body, external nature, his mental life and his *human* life.[49]

How this form of alienation follows from the two previous manifestations Marx shows by placing the first two in contradistinction to his concept of man as a species being.

That man is a species being means for Marx that man is a *universal individual* who normally realizes a *fruitful* relationship with nature. The expression "universal individual" is only suggested by him in his definition of man as a species being:

> Man is a species-being not only in the sense that he makes the community (his own as well as those of other things) his object both practically and theoretically, but also (and this is simply another expression for the same thing) in the sense that he treats himself as the present, living species, as a *universal* and consequently free being.[50]

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[49] Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.,* pp. 126, 129.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

As a species being man identifies himself at every turn with his species—he is conscious of himself as a free being in the face of nature, which is the unique quality of his species. This identification with his species and with nature means for Marx that man universalizes his being in nature. How then does man universalize his being in nature? Marx explains this by comparing the human and the animal species.

The comparison of the human and the animal species illustrates how man is universal in character whereas animals are limited. From a physical standpoint both man and animals are similar in that they live from inorganic nature but differ in that humans function throughout the entire sphere of nature whereas the animal is limited geographically in his movements in nature and in his ability to utilize the natural products at hand. Man has the potential to treat the whole of nature as his own in a physical sense. Marx writes:

> Species-life, for man as for animals, has its physical basis in the fact that man (like animals) lives from inorganic nature, and since man is more universal that an animal so the range of inorganic nature from which he lives is more universal.[51]

Freedom to function throughout nature is involved in this concept of universality. Human universality and human freedom are thus unique traits of the human species in its physical relation to nature. In such a physical relation the whole of nature opens before man innumerable opportunities for the physical maintenance of life. Nature in this sense is man's "inorganic body."[52] Due to the universal scope of man's appropriation of

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[51]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 126.

[52]*Ibid.*

inorganic objects, the whole of nature, Marx concludes, is his inorganic body.

Men also universalize themselves in nature theoretically and practically. This means for Marx that nature provides the objects and instruments of his life activity. Theory and practice are always contingent upon nature to provide the sensuous objects of intellect and the material objects of man's labor.

> Plants, animals, minerals, air, light, etc. etc. constitute, from the theoretical aspect, a part of human consciousness as objects of natural science and art; they are man's spiritual inorganic nature, his intellectual means of life, which he must first prepare for enjoyment and perpetuation. So also, from the practical aspect, they form a part of human life and activity. In practice man lives only from these natural products, whether in the form of food, heating, clothing, housing, etc.[53]

All of nature can be used for the intellectual development and enjoyment of man—he can deal with the whole of nature scientifically and artistically. Man universalizes himself in nature in practice by transforming material objects into objects suitable for human development, or he has the ability to humanize the whole of nature for the humanization of man.

Human activity as understood by Marx gives man a universality not enjoyed by the animals. The species character of any being is determined by the kind of activity it engages in. The species character of the animals is determined by the restricted nature of their activity. The species character of humans is determined by the universal scope of their

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[53]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 126.

activity.

> The animal is one with its life activity. It does not distinguish the activity from itself. It is *its activity*. But man makes his life activity itself an object of his will and consciousness. He has a conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he is completely identified. Conscious life activity distinguishes man from the life activity of animals. Only for this reason is he a species-being. Or rather, he is only a self-conscious being, i.e. his own life is an object for him, because he is a species-being. Only for this reason is his activity free activity.[54]

Freedom and consciousness mark the activity of man. He is not determined by his activity, for his activity, his life, is an object of his will and consciousness such that this activity can be altered according to the dictates of his own will. Man's greatest freedom then is with himself, that is, to be his own creator. The human can create himself due to his unique ability to hold all of his life before himself as an object of consciousness and then choose alternative ways to objectify himself in nature. Marx explains: "Productive life is, however, species-life. It is life creating life. In the type of activity resides the whole character of a species, its species-character; and free, conscious activity is the species-character of human beings."[55]

The relationship that man normally enjoys with nature is perverted by alienated labor. Instead of his life being a means of creating life, i.e. his own life, it becomes simply a means of animal-life existence —"Life itself appears only as a *means of life*."[56] No longer is man

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[54]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

[55]*Ibid.*

[56]*Ibid.*

identified with his species character, namely the adaptability and ability to rise above an animal-like, restricted kind of existence. Alienated labor inverts this normal relationship as Marx says, "Alienated labor reverses the relationship, in that man because he is a self-conscious being makes his life activity, his *being*, only a means for his existence."[57] Man's humanity is thus reduced to animality by alienated labor. Marx believes that such a devaluation of man is in particular the consequence of man's separation from his product and from his activity.

> Since alienated labor: (1) alienates nature from man; and (2) alienates man from himself, from his own active function, his life activity; so it alienates him from the species.[58]

It was shown above that when man is separated from the object of labor, he is estranged from nature. Estrangement from nature means that man does not universalize his being in nature but rather that he is limited in his utilization of nature in his own self-development. It was also shown above that when man is separated from his natural activity he is alienated from his true self and regresses toward animality—man is handicapped to effectively identify himself with his species. It is from such premises that Marx concludes that alienated labor separates man from his species being and nature.

The alienation of man from his species and nature manifests itself in particular ways according to Marx. Briefly, alienation from the species accents the self-interestedness of man, and alienation from nature points to the fact that man regresses toward animality.

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[57]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

[58]*Ibid.*

Estranged labor amplifies the egotism of man and quells his species life, the normal identification of himself with the human race. This condition, says Marx, turns "*species-life* into a means of individual life."[59] Life in the capitalistic community thwarts his affinity with others and enhances his self-centeredness which means that man loses his sense of unity, that is, his sense of community and his individuality are estranged. The species-life and the individual life are not blended into a unified and substantial part of the human. Instead of species life being a means of self-realization, it becomes a source of bondage in that the individual becomes merely a means to fulfil the ends of the community. Community or species life in this sense is an abstraction for Marx because it is only the social order of the ruling class and not a community in a true sense.

From the perspective of the laborer in a capitalistic society, labor appears to him merely as a means to sustain physical life, for "labour, *life activity*, productive life, now appear to man only as *means* for the satisfaction of a need, the need to maintain his physical existence."[60] The very opposite should characterize labor. Besides satisfying his physical, purely animal needs it should be a means for him to come to full stature as a human, to develop a humane type of social order.

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[59]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 127.

[60]*Ibid.*

Marx's concept of objectification illuminates further this natural relationship which man sustains with his species through nature but which is dissipated through alienated labor. He writes in the *Manuscripts:*

> While, therefore, alienated labour takes away the object of production from man, it also takes away his *species-life*, his real objectivity as a species-being, and changes his advantage over animals into a disadvantage in so far as his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him.[61]

Earlier it was shown that the concept of objectification was linked with the individual worker but now the concept is broadened and linked with the entire species. The objects of production 'feed-back' to man a confirmation of his role as a generic being. As a species being he is able to produce freely and consciously in the face of nature without the limitations imposed for example on animals. Since the objectification of man in his production is a confirmation of his species life, his production has a universal quality in contrast to the restricted character of animal production.

> The practical construction of an *objective world*, the *manipulation* of inorganic nature, is the confirmation of man as a conscious species-being, i.e. a being who treats the species as his own being or himself as a species-being. Of course, animals also produce. They construct nests, dwellings, as in the case of bees, beavers, ants, etc. But they only produce what is strictly necessary for themselves or their young. They produce only in a single direction, while man produces universally. They produce only under the compulsion of direct physical needs, while man produces when he is free from such need. Animals produce only themselves, while man reproduces the whole of nature. The products of animal production belong directly to

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[61]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 128.

> their physical bodies, while man is free in face of his product. Animals construct only in accordance with the standards and needs of the species to which they belong, while man knows how to produce in accordance with the standards of every species and knows how to apply the appropriate standard to the object. Thus man constructs also in accordance with the laws of beauty.[62]

Animals do produce universally but only in a restricted sense, while man knows no natural limitation in his production. Animals are strictly beings of necessity, whereas man can rise above necessity and limitations and can produce beyond the requirements of the body. Man thus produces a world of objects which transcend the limited needs of his body—he produces universally because his truly human needs are multifarious and complex and can normally be realized when his labor sustains a fruitful relationship with nature. The standards by which man produces are also universal in character and as such are artistic, but animals have no art since their standard of production is limited to the determinations of their own species. Man's species life is precisely this free and artistic kind of activity. That which reduces man from the dignity of his species to the limitations of the animal is alienated labor:

> Just as alienated labour transforms free and self-directed activity into a means, so it transforms the species-life of man into a means of physical existence.[63]

Man's generic life no longer means his realization as a man, but rather his tutelage to a physical existence; the generic life has become a means

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[62]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, pp. 127, 128.

[63]*Ibid.*, p. 128.

instead of a realization.

The final aspect of the meaning of alienated labor is that it separates man from his fellows. This manifestation of estrangement is, asserts Marx, "a direct consequence of the alienation of man from the product of his labour, from his life activity and from his species-life."[64] His arguments at explaining the connection between this final manifestation and the other three are brief. In the first place, he says:

> When man confronts himself he also confronts *other* men. What is true of man's relationship to his work, to the product of his work and to himself, is also true of his relationship to other men, to their labour and to the objects of their labour.[65]

In other words, man judges others in the light of his own level of humanity which is determined by the relationship one sustains to labor. The labor relation thus determines man's fundamental outlook on life. If in alienated labor man becomes estranged from himself to the extent that he is opposed to himself, then this self-alienation, disunity of being, creates in man tensions such that he opposes others and others in the same condition oppose him. These antagonisms between men in the social order are the first indications of alienation which attract the attention of people. Marx writes for example: "Human alienation, and above all the relation of man to himself, is first realized and expressed in the relationship between each man and other men."[66] It was precisely human conflict which the classical economists pictured as the state of man under

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[64]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.,* p. 129.

[65]*Ibid.*

[66]*Ibid.*

capitalism. This conflict as described by Marx's extensive quotations from these economists is summarized in his own words: "The only motive forces which political economy recognizes are *avarice* and the *war between the avaricious, competition.*"[67] Marx set out to analyze this conflict and bring to light the philosophical presuppositions underlying capitalism; he situated the cause of human conflict, human alienation, in the labor process.

This basic opposition, i.e. the opposition of man to himself and to others, is the prelude and cause of all social, economic and political oppositions between men. Marx concludes in the *Manuscripts:*

> Thus in the relationship of alienated labour every man regards other men according to the standards and relationships in which he finds himself placed as a worker.
> . . . . . .
> For all human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and all the types of servitude are only modifications or consequences of this relation.[68]

The egoism and animality of alienated labor shape man's orientation to life and determine his actual relations in the whole of society and thus create a vexatious divorce among men.

Once that Marx has situated human devalorization in the labor process, he proceeds to examine how "alienated labor must express and reveal itself in reality."[69] In the first place alienated labor divides society into two antagonistic classes--the laboring class and the capitalist

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[67]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 121.

[68]*Ibid.*, pp. 129, 132, 133.

[69]*Ibid.*, p. 129.

class, the propertyless and the property owners. How then is alienated labor responsible for such a universal rupture in society? Marx believes that this fundamental rupture occurs when the object of production is estranged from the worker. His argument for this assertion begins by asking to whom does the product belong: "If the product of labor is alien to me and confronts me as an alien power to whom does it belong?"[70] Three possible candidates are scrutinized to determine the possessor. The gods are a possibility since much of human labor in the earliest stages of advanced production, namely in Egypt, India and Mexico, was the construction of temples and so on done in the service of the gods and as a product belonging to the gods. This candidate is unsatisfactory to Marx because the gods alone were never the lords of labor. Furthermore, the achievements and marvels of human labor would in time tend to reduce more and more the glory of the gods.

> What a contradiction it would be if the more man subjugates nature by his labour, and the more the marvels of the gods are rendered superfluous by the marvels of industry, the more he should abstain from his joy in producing and his enjoyment of the product for love of these powers.[71]

The next candidate, nature, is quickly dismissed because it has never in history been the lord of labor. One must finally conclude, says Marx, that "the *alien* being to whom labour and the product of labour belong, to whose service labour is devoted, and to whose enjoyment the product of

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[70]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 129.

[71]*Ibid.*, p. 130

labour goes, can only be *man* himself."[72] His support of this contention stems from the assumption that all human relations are determined by the relation man sustains in the labor process:

> Consider the earlier statement that the relation of man to himself is first *realized*, objectified, through his relation to other men. If he is related to the product of his labour, his objectified labour, as to an *alien*, hostile, powerful and independent object, he is related in such a way that another alien, hostile, powerful and independent man is the lord of this object. If he is related to his own activity as to unfree activity, then he is related to it as activity in the service, and under the domination, coercion and yoke, of another man.
>
> Every self-alienation of man, from himself and from nature, appears in the relation which he postulates between other men and himself and nature.[73]

Not only does alienated labor produce the worker's relation to the object and the activity of production as one of strangeness and hostility, but it also produces the relation of other men to his product and activity.

Just as the worker creates his own activity as a vitiation, a punishment, and his own product as a loss, belonging to another, so the worker creates the domination of the non-producer as a hostile power over production and its product. The intent of this assertion is that the worker not only alienates himself in labor but also that his alienation is responsible for the alienation of the capitalist, that is, in Marx's words, the worker "bestows upon the stranger an activity which is not his own."[74] Marx denotes this other man or stranger with a number of descriptive

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[72]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 130

[73]*Ibid.*

[74]*Ibid.*, p. 131.

names such as "lord of labor," "the non-producer," "the stranger," "the non-worker," "the capitalist."[75] This other man is outside the labor process in a direct sense, but his relation to the worker is a determination of the labor process itself: "it must be kept in mind that every alienation which affects the worker has its repercussions upon the capitalist."[76] The capitalist is thus not the ultimate cause of human alienation, his own or that of the laborer, but rather this cause is situated in the laborer and his relation to production. It is alienated labor that creates the consumptive rupture between labor and capital. In view of the decisive role Marx ascribes to the relations of labor, it can be sensed how alienated labor will resound at the core of all the relationships between men and will bring about the institutionalization of man's social relationships in the form of a structural opposition which will make social life a mechanism against nature, that is a mechanism of human bondage. Marx's conclusion regarding the overall effect of alienated labor is that "all human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and all the types of servitude are only modifications or consequences of this relation."[77]

Private Property and the Division of Labor

By locating human alienation in the labor process Marx believes

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[75]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*,pp. 129-131.

[76]Wilfred Desan, *The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 37.

[77]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*,pp. 132, 133.

that he has revealed the hidden philosophical assumption underlying the capitalist system. He believes that in the social order based on private property, competition, and profit work is not determined by man's free will and the intent of the community; it does not express the generic life; instead it is ruled by the laws of capitalist production which Marx argues is a consequence of alienated labor. The classical economists explained the movement of the capitalist system as a movement of private property; private property was their starting point and from this assumption the whole social order could be apprehended.[78] Marx agrees that private property is indeed an essential constituent of the capitalist system, but he rejects the notion that it is the essence of the system for it is incapable of explaining why man is devaluated. Private property is not the basic fact of political economy because it is merely "the product, the necessary result, of *alienated labour*, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself. *Private property* is thus derived from the analysis of the concept of *alienated* labour; that is, alienated man, alienated labour, alienated life, and estranged man."[79] Alienated labor itself then is the prior fact, it is a form of living that generates private property as its derivative. This simply enlightens the fact that Marx has broken through the superficial analysis of the political economists and has penetrated to what he considers to be the root of the problem,

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[78]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 120.

[79]*Ibid.*, p. 131.

namely human alienation in the labor process. Herbert Marcuse calls capitalism the reification of personal relations between men into a form of objective relations between things, for, he writes:

> The system of capitalism relates men to each other through the commodities they exchange. The social status of individuals, their standard of living, the satisfaction of their needs, their freedom, and their power are all determined by the value of their commodities. The capacities and needs of the individual have no part in the evaluation. Even man's most human attributes become a function of money, the general substitute for commodities. Individuals participate in the social process as owners of commodities only. Their mutual relations are those of their commodities.[80]

Raya Dunayevskaya describes Marx's achievement by saying, "Marx's analysis of labor . . . goes much further than the economic structure of society. His analysis goes to actual *human* relations."[81]

Marx links his notion of the division of labor with that of alienated labor. The division of labor means the fragmentation of the process of production such that a given productive process is separated into many particular parts or details, the sum total of which constitutes the whole. That the division of labor is an outgrowth of and an open expression of alienated labor Marx expressly asserts:

> The *division of labour* is the economic expression of the *social character of labour* within alienation. Or, since *labour* is only an expression of human activity within alienation, of life activity as alienation of life, the *division of labour* is nothing but the *alienated* establishment of human activity as a *real species-activity* or *the activity of man as a species-being.*[82]

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[80]Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1954), p. 279.

[81]Raya Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom: from 1766 until Today* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1964), p. 60.

[82]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 181.

It was noted earlier that private property is a manifestation of alienated labor, and now Marx asserts that the concept of private property carries with it the idea of the division of labor. The reason why private property connotes the division of labor is that the success of capitalism depends upon an increasing division of labor.

> The whole of modern political economy is agreed, however, upon the fact that division of labour and abundance of production, division of labour and accumulation of capital, are mutually determining; and also that liberated and autonomous private property alone can produce the most effective and extensive division of labour.[83]

In other words, the capitalist system more thoroughly brings about the division of labor than any previous social system in history.[84] Although the division of labor does indeed increase the power of labor and the wealth of society, it nevertheless has an adverse effect upon the worker in that it impoverishes him and "makes him into a machine . . . ; it makes the worker increasingly dependent upon the capitalist, exposes him to greater competition."[85] It means further that the worker is dependent upon a "particular, extremely one-sided, mechanical kind of labour. . . . Just as he is reduced, therefore, both spiritually and physically to the condition of a machine, and from being a man becomes merely an abstract activity and a belly, so he becomes increasingly dependent upon all the fluctuations in market price, in the employment of capital, and in the

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[83]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 185.

[84]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, pp. 8-22, 65, 66.

[85]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 75.

caprices of the rich. Equally, the growth of the class of men who are entirely dependent upon work increases competition among the workers and lowers their price. In the factory system this situation of the workers reaches its climax."[86] The increase of the division of labor signifies for Marx an increase in human bondage such that finally under capitalism human labor "has lost all semblance of self-activity and only sustains life by stunting it."[87] The loss of human freedom thus constitutes its major perniciousness. Robert Tucker expresses Marx's viewpoint in these words:

> Thus, the division of labour in all its expressions is condemned as evil, and first of all on the ground that it means deprivation of freedom. Marx holds that the labour performed under every historical class division of labour in society has been essentially unfree. The social relations of production have always been coercive relations of production and servitude. The producers have always stood in a relation of servitude to the class of those who appropriate the product as private property. And the history of this relation, from the time of primitive slave-labour to that of modern capitalist wage labour, is one of *increasing* servitude.[88]

History manifests the progress of human bondage in its increasing acceptance of the division of labor, and this for Marx is just another way of stating that history is a story of an enlarging condition of human alienation.

This progressive bondage due to the division of labor has its source partially in the divorce that is entailed between the intellectual and the material forces of production.

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[86]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

[87]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

[88]Robert C. Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

> Division of labour becomes truly such from the moment when a division of material and mental labour appears.
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> . . . . . .
>
> The division of labour, which we saw above as one of the chief forces of history up till now, manifests itself also in the ruling class as the division of mental and material labour, so that inside this class one part appears as the thinkers of the class (its active, conceptive ideologists, who make the perfecting of the illusion of the class about itself their chief source of livelihood), while the others' attitude to these ideas and illusions is more passive and receptive, because they are in reality the active members of this class and have less time to make up illusions and ideas about themselves.[89]

This explanation of the source of the division of labor parallels the meaning Marx gives to alienated labor as the separation of the laborer from his natural activity. It was noted earlier that in this aspect of alienation the issue of the worker's freedom came into focus. His activity and thus his life was under the control of another. His activity also was not his own because the intelligence and the will for action proceeded from another. Here then is the fundamental source of the division of labor which Marx denotes as a divorce between the mental and the material forces of production in *The German Ideology*. In this situation the laborer is consigned to an activity which carries with it the loss of intelligence and will, instead of being an activity which enhances the full employment of personal faculties and initiative. Such practice "converts the labourer into a crippled monstrosity, by forcing his detail dexterity at the expense of a world of productive capabilities and instincts."[90] The division of labor then means first and most

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[89]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, pp. 20, 39, 40.

[90]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 396.

significantly the division of man himself, that is, self-alienation.

The division of labor, as does alienated labor, touches upon every pore of society as a canker sore. Marx's description of the effect of the division of labor on society in general reinforces and enlightens what Marx means by the all-inclusive influence of alienated labor. For example, Marx writes in *Capital* I that "the division of labor seizes upon, not only the economical, but every other sphere of society, and everywhere lays the foundation of that all engrossing system of specialising and sorting men, that development in a man of one single faculty at the expense of all other faculties, which caused A. Ferguson, the master of Adam Smith, to exclaim: 'We make a nation of Helots, and have no free citizens.'"[92] In an advanced industrial society the division of labor shapes men's lives and deprives them of self-autonomy, as Marx writes in *The German Ideology*, "the individuals themselves are entirely determined by the division of labor and hence are brought into the most complete dependence on one another."[93] Once the division of labor dominates human relations in society, the only consciousness that can issue forth is a false consciousness. The character of human consciousness, it must be noted, is determined by the social and economic activities of a people, and a society afflicted with alienated labor can do nothing but produce what Marx calls a false

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[91]Karl Marx, *Capital* Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 389.

[92]*Ibid.*

[93]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

consciousness, for "consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process."[94] This false consciousness produced by alienated men manifests itself in a fragmentation of knowledge.[95] Such a social division of men in time embraces the whole of human life and both the individual and society suffer from its disintegrating effects.

Alienated Labor and Moral Values

Capitalism engenders the growth of moral values which are fragmented and relative only to specific spheres of life because it fails to grasp its own essence as alienated human activity. Because capitalism fails to grasp this fact and to remove its contradictions by abolishing its system of private property whereby man is reduced to a mere commodity, capitalism creates a system of moral values which, instead of being a science of man that unifies his moral outlook, becomes the means to negate man, confuse him, by creating a disintegrated system of values. This comes about because capitalism itself according to Marx is based on a simple, inhuman, moral principle: eat less, drink less, practice self-denial, give up as many human needs as possible and save more.

> Political economy, the science of *wealth*, is therefore, at the same time, the science of renunciation, of privation and of saving, which actually succeeds in depriving man of fresh *air* and of physical *activity*. . . . Its principal thesis is the renunciation of life and of human needs. . . . The less you *are*, the less you express your life, the more you *have*, the

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[94]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 14.

[95]*Ibid.*, p. 20.

> greater is your *alienated* life and the greater is the saving of your alienated being. Everything which the economist takes from you in the way of life and humanity, he restores to you in the form of *money* and *wealth*.[96]

Political economy operates on such moral principles, but these are in conflict with what men hold to be moral in other spheres of life. It has been shown that alienation disrupts society and creates social conflict such that opposition between classes and groups of people is crystallized into discordant sets of moral values. For example, the business world has its set of values suitable for a free market economy; the family has its morals relevant to its maintenance; and so on. Marx specifically indicates the appearance of this conflict in society:

> Everything which you own must be made *venal*, i.e. useful. Suppose I ask the economist: am I acting in accordance with economic laws if I earn money by the sale of my body, by prostituting it to another person's lust (in France, the factory workers call the prostitution of their wives and daughters the nth hour of work, which is literally true); or if I sell my friends to the Moroccans (and the direct sale of men occurs in all civilized countries in the form of the trade in conscripts)? He will reply: you are not acting contrary to my laws, but you must take into account what Cousin Morality and Cousin Religion have to say. My *economic* morality and religion have no objection to make. . . . But then whom should we believe, the economist or the moralist? The morality of political economy is *gain*, work, thrift, and sobriety—yet political economy promises to satisfy my needs. The political economy of morality is the riches of a good conscience, of virtue, etc., but how can I be virtuous if I am not alive and how can I have a good conscience if I am not aware of anything? The nature of alienation implies that each sphere applies a different and contradictory norm, that morality does not apply the same norm as political economy, etc., because each of them is a particular alienation of man; each is concentrated upon a specific area of alienated activity and is itself alienated from the other.[97]

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[96]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

[97]*Ibid.*, p. 173.

The important question for Marx is, how can a man be moral under capitalism when life is so fragmented that each alienated sphere of life produces contradictory standards of morality? Alienation prevents this possibility and accordingly "leads to the perversion of all values."[98] Capitalism in the end creates a moral monstrosity and, instead of becoming a free moral agent, enslaves him to the inhuman power of money.

Marx holds that the social and economic life of man under capitalism is a state of alienation, a state of egotism which ultimately develops to the point where it becomes the practical religion of money-worship. Money in this case is the essence of alienation because man replaces the worship of all other things and gods by the worship of money. In his early essay "On The Jewish Question" Marx argues that the real god of the Jew as well as that of others is money. The emancipation of the Jewish minority in Germany is the immediate concern of Marx in this article. His solution is that, instead of needing religious emancipation as some advocated, Jewish emancipation is dependent on the general emancipation of all men from alienated labor whose moving force is lust for money:

> What is the worldly cult of the Jew? *Huckstering*. What is this worldly god? *Money*. . . . The Jew, who occupies a distinctive place in civil society, only manifests in a distinctive way the judaism of civil society. Money is the jealous god of Israel, beside which no other god may exist. Money abases all the gods of mankind and changes them into commodities. Money is the universal and self-sufficient *value* of all things. It has, therefore, deprived the whole

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[98]Erich Fromm, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

> world, both the human world and nature, of their own proper value. Money is the alienated essence of man's work and existence: this essence dominates him and he worships it.[99]

Here Marx speaks of money as the "alien being" and of the worship of this "worldly god" as the force that alienates man from himself, that is from his productive activity and from nature. By noting the reality of this worldly god in a capitalist society, Marx thereby identifies passion as the moving force in human life. For example, he describes alienated man as one who produces under the domination of egotistic need. Robert Tucker portrays this compulsion in Marx's alienated man as the lust for money.

> The compulsion that transforms free creative self-activity into alienated labour is the compulsion to amass wealth. Marx portrays it in his manuscripts as a maniacal obsession with the accumulation of capital, a veritable fanaticism of appropriation of the world of created things, a lust for money.[100]

Marx calls this passion "avarice" and ascribes the concept of it to political economy: "The only motive forces which political economy recognizes are *avarice* and the *war between the avaricious, competition.*"[101] Marx thus describes this compulsion as a kind of acquisitive mania that sees in money the means of exercising power over everything.

Money as the essence of alienated labor is the "omnipotent being" that man worships and that confers unlimited power on its possessor. Marx views money as the "*pander* between need and object, between human

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[99]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*,pp. 34, 36, 37.

[100]Robert C. Tucker, *op. cit.*, pp. 137, 138.

[101]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 121.

life and the means of subsistence."[102] Such a conception situates money in the position of mediating one's life and also that of other men such that Marx concludes that money "is for me the *other* person," that is, the one who dominates and determines his existence. Since money is man's object of affection under capitalism, "money is the highest good, and so its possessor is good. Besides, money saves me the trouble of being dishonest; therefore, I am presumed honest."[103] From Shakespeare, says Marx, one can learn about the two leading characteristics of money:

> Shakespeare emphasizes particularly two properties of money: (1) it is the visible deity, the transformation of all human and natural qualities into their opposites, the universal confusion and inversion of things; it brings incompatibles into fraternity; (2) it is the universal whore, the universal pander between men and nations.[104]

Money is the power over humanity; it is "the means of exercising command over all that the hand and the mind of man have ever produced or will produce."[105]

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[102]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.,* pp. 189, 190.

[103]*Ibid.*, p. 191.

[104]*Ibid.*, p. 192.

[105]Robert C. Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

CHAPTER V

LABOR—SELF-REALIZATION FOR ALL

Alienated labor thwarts man in his efforts to achieve the dual humanization of nature and himself. Emancipation from the dehumanizing effects of alienation is linked according to Marx with the liberation of labor conceived as a commodity in the capitalistic system of economic production. Such an emancipation will permit the attainment of man's ultimate goal, namely his humanization. These comments suggest that the activity which has on the one hand produced the greatest suffering for mankind promises on the other hand to create the maximum in human progress for all.

Liberated Labor and the Communist Society

For labor to maintain its fecundity for all, it is necessary to have a society of free men, a society in which the individual coincides with his species. Such a society is the communist society as envisioned by Marx; it is a society in which the productive forces are expressions of man's intrinsic self. Marx describes such a social order in *Capital* I:

> Let us now picture to ourselves, by way of change, a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the means of producion in common, in which the labour-power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour-power of the community. All the characteristics of Robinson's labour are here repeated, but with this difference, that they are social, instead of individual. Everything produced by him was exclusively the result of his own personal labour, and therefore simply an object of use for himself. The total product of our community is a social product. One portion serves as fresh means of production and remains social. But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. A distribution of this portion amongst them

> is consequently necessary. The mode of this distribution will vary with the productive organization of the community, and the degree of historical development attained by the producers. We will assume, but merely for the sake of a parallel with the production of commodities, that the share of each individual producer in the means of subsistence is determined by his labour-time. Labour-time would, in that case, play a double part. Its apportionment in accordance with a definite social plan maintains the proper proportion between the different kinds of work to be done and the various wants of the community. On the other hand, it also serves as a measure of the portion of the common labour borne by each individual and of his share in the part of the total product destined for individual consumption. The social relations of the individual producers, with regard both to their labour and to its products, are in this case perfectly simple and intelligible, and that with regard not only to production but also to distribution.[1]

A free society thus entails the existence of a truly social system of production favorable to man's reconciliation with nature and his reconciliation with himself and others.

What communism means and what role practical creative efforts play in this social order Marx emphatically asserts in the third manuscript of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. His discussion is succinct and philosophical in nature, but the treatment is nevertheless "fuller and more concrete than anything he later wrote on this subject, and in fact is the only really serious effort he ever made to explain systematically and in some detail what communism meant to him."[2] Marx does not here treat the questions of the economic organization of society that have customarily been considered in socialist and communist theories both before and after his time. Marx, for example, generally held a low estimate of

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[1]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), pp. 90, 91.

[2]Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 150.

of the expressions of communism propounded in this day because they failed to perceive the real nature of the problem, namely the reduction of the human to a mere commodity. Such ill-conceived theories of communism have "not yet grasped the positive nature of private property, or the *human* nature of needs, it is still captured and contaminated by private property. It has well understood the concept, but not the essence."[3] Furthermore, such a limited perception "tears out of their context isolated elements of this development."[4] "Crude" communism, as Marx calls it, understands correctly that private property must be abolished, but its understanding remains an abstraction since it only abolishes the idea of private property and not actual private property. In effect, "crude" communism retains private property by transforming the private property of individuals into the private property of the community. Under these conditions all the effects of alienation remain, for "the community is only a community of *work* and of *equality of wages* paid out by the communal capital, by the *community* as universal capitalist. The two sides of the relation are raised to a *supposed* universality; *labour* as a condition in which everyone is placed, and *capital* as the acknowledged universality and power of the community."[5] In other words, man remains in bondage under this scheme. Marx's theory envisions the total emancipation

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[3]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 155.

[4]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[5]*Ibid.*, p. 154.

of man from his actual condition of alienation, and his conception does not delineate the particular organization of a free society but only its broad outline.

In his consideration of communism, Marx focuses attention on the human and philosophical dimension of the problem and accordingly says little about questions of economic planning, the distribution of goods, the organization of public services, communal living arrangements, and so on. For instance, in *Capital* I he briefly portrays the conditions of a communist society by saying that the production output of the community will be distributed to all, but the manner in which this is distributed depends on the level of historical development in any given community. He writes: "The mode of this distribution will vary with the productive organization of the community, and the degree of historical development attained by the producers."[6] This statement suggests that all communities in the future society will not be homogeneous in their productive and human attainments. For this reason alone it would appear ludicrous to Marx to give in advance the details of life under communism. His primary concern for this future mode of life centers in the general preconditions which men must realize in order to effect a truly human society.

The Proletarian Revolution

The moment in history which changes the capitalist, alienated world into the communist, liberated world is the proletarian revolution. The

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[6]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

extremity of alienated labor under a capitalistic mode of production prepares a social class, the proleteriat, to effect this momentous transformation of society. The peculiar nature of private property under capitalism creates in the proletariat the instrument which will bring about its own downfall.[7] The progress of industry which depends upon an enlarging division of labor and which accordingly reduces man to the level of a commodity led to the rise of the proletariat. In *The German Ideology* Marx expressly links the rise of the proletariat with modern capitalism:

> In the development of productive forces there comes a stage at which productive forces and means of intercourse are called into existence, which, under the existing relationships, only cause mischief, and which are no longer productive but destructive forces (machinery and money); and connected with this a class is called forth, which has to bear all the burdens of society without enjoying its advantages, which, ousted from society, is forced into a most decided antagonism to all other classes; a class which forms the majority of all members of society, and from which emanates the consciousness of the necessity of a fundamental revolution, the communist consciousness, which may, of course, arise among the other classes too through the contemplation of the situation of this class.[8]

The suffering and privation of the worker under capitalism creates a unique social class, unique in that its plight represents the complete loss of humanity, for, says Marx: "Production does not only produce man as a *commodity*, the *human commodity*, man in the form of a *commodity*; in conformity with this situation it produces him as a *mentally* and *physically*

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[7]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in *Selected Works*, Vol. I (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), p. 45.

[8]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 68, 69.

dehumanized being."[9] The proletarian becomes the most wretched creature, alienated from himself to the extreme by being forced to sell himself for wages. The proletariat is in this respect expressive of the essence of capitalism and of its most dehumanizing aspects. Such devalorization situates the proletariat as a class not *in* but *outside* existing society.

The patterns of productive labor developed by capitalism have been the necessary condition for the formation of this distinctive class. In *The Poverty of Philosophy* Marx traces the development of the proletariat:

> The first attempts of workers to *associate* among themselves always take place in the form of combinations.
>
> Large-scale industry concentrates in one place a crowd of people unknown to one another. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of wages, this common interest which they have against their boss, unites them in a common thought of resistance—*combination.*
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> . . . . . .
>
> In this struggle—a veritable civil war—all the elements necessary for a coming battle unite and develop. Once it has reached this point, association takes on a political character.
>
> Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of the people of the country into workers. The combination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle, of which we have noted only a few phases, this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends become class interests.[10]

Class antagonism between the bourgeoise and the proletariat are thus created and engendered by productive relations. Labor unions are here viewed as training grounds for the coming revolution. Labor associations also increase in number and become progressively concentrated due to the

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[9]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 138.

[10]Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 172, 173.

nature of industrial growth. This aspect of the movement is outlined in the *Communist Manifesto:*

> But with the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number, it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interests of the minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority.[11]

The proletariat come in time to represent the majority interest. The maturation of the proletariat is thus necessarily linked with that of modern capitalism. The impulse of the movement is derived from an increasing dehumanization, an increasing reduction of labor to a commodity.

The progressive suppression of the proletariat finally produces in its members a mature revolutionary consciousness, an awareness that a fundamental transformation of productive forces is imperative if the complete loss of humanity represented by their servility is to be regained for the sake of all mankind. Marx writes:

> Only the proletariat of the present day, who are completely shut off from all self-activity, are in a position to achieve a complete and no longer restricted self-activity, which consists in the appropriation of a totality of productive forces and in the thus postulated development of a totality of capacities.[12]

The proletariat become aware that only revolutionary activity on their part can liberate mankind from its blind commitment to the principle of private property. Karl Löwith comments:

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[11]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, pp. 42, 44.

[12]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

> Concentrating and summing up the antagonisms of all social spheres in their human summit, the proletariat is the key to the problem of the entire human society; for it cannot emancipate itself from the bondage of capitalism without emancipating thereby the totality of society.[13]

Private property, the guiding principle of capitalism, that brought the proletariat into existence will be the very principle the proletariat seeks to eliminate by its revolutionary act. Marx elucidates the proletariat's basis for dissolving the old order in his essay, "The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right":

> When the proletariat announces the *dissolution of the existing order*, it only declares the *secret of its* own existence, for it *is* the *effective* dissolution of this order. When the proletariat demands the *negation of private property* it only lays down as a *principle for society* what society has already made a principle *for the proletariat*, and what the *latter* already involuntarily embodies as the negative result of society.[14]

The movement toward the complete supersession of private property depends on nothing more concrete than the claim that the proletariat, being divorced from all property, must make the abolition of property its "principle." Eugene Kamenka succinctly summarizes what import the proletariat and its revolutionary act possess in the Marxian perspective:

> He sees in it not just the empirical existence, but the logical category. The proletariat occupies a necessary place in the dialectical schema; it is driven by 'the secret of its own existence' to accomplish the dissolution and raising up into a new form of the old order.[15]

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[13]Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History: the Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949), p. 37.

[14]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 58, 59.

[15]Eugene Kamenka, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 68.

The proletarian revolution, says Marx, "must have a universal character, . . . the appropriation of a totality of instruments of production"[16] if an effective transformation of society is to result. He writes further in *The German Ideology:*

> Both for the production on a mass scale of this communist consciousness, and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a *revolution;* this revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class *overthrowing* it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew.[17]

Without a massive proletarian revolution communism cannot be achieved. The act sweeps away the old conditions of production and class. This movement of the masses is also universal in the sense that it represents all mankind and not the interests of a particular class; the proletariat is "in itself an expression of the dissolution of all classes."[18] The proletariat cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class without simultaneously and decisively emancipating society at large. The momentous task of the proletariat in the Marxian schema, says G. Wetter, "is to abolish private property; it thereby itself undergoes a qualitative change, ceases to be a proletariat, and in emancipating itself ushers in the ultimate and total emancipation of all mankind and hence a complete

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[16]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 66.

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 69.

[18]*Ibid.*

transformation of the entire world."[19]

Communism Defined

The concept of labor carries with it a positive dimension in the future society. As has been suggested above, communism for Marx is the abolition of human alienation and the return of man to the realization of his true self through the medium of labor. The negative aspect of man's return to himself means that the social order based on alienated labor must be destroyed. Positively, man must create his life under conditions of a liberated society by means of his own productive activities. Definite things are realizable in this free society, and these Marx expresses in broad outline in his most explicit and yet concise definition of communism:

> *Communism* is the *positive* abolition of *private property*, of *human self-alienation*, and thus the real *appropriation* of human nature through and for man. It is, therefore, the return of man himself as a *social*, i.e. really human, being, a complete and conscious return which assimilates all the wealth of previous development. Communism as a fully developed humanism is naturalism. It is the *definitive* resolution of the antagonism between man and nature, and between man and man. It is the true solution of the conflict between existence and essence, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solution of the riddle of history and knows itself to be this solution.[20]

Under communism men accomplish those things which accord with their generic being, for communism means for Marx, as Erich Fromm expresses it, "the social order which permits the return of man to himself, the identity between existence and essence, the overcoming of the separatism and antagonism between

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[19]Gustav A. Wetter, *Dialectical Materialism*, trans. Peter Heath (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 25.

[20]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

subject and object, the humanization of nature; it means a world in which man is no longer a stranger among strangers, but is in *his* world, where he is at home."[21] Such a social order is predicated according to Marx on the abolition or transcendence of private property and on the realization of a fruitful relationship between man and nature by means of his labor.

Communism represents the return of man to true human life. The attainment of a fruitful relationship with nature by labor provides the necessary condition for man's humanization, or "the real appropriation of human nature through and for man."[22] What was lost under capitalism now is regained under communism. The alien objects, his products, are now appropriated through liberated labor for the total development of man and not for the expansion of an economic system as such. In the communistic society man no longer alienates his energies, i.e. himself, into the goods so produced. His labor represents not merely an alteration of nature but at the same time an alteration of man himself, for "he creates himself, in the process, as a social being."[23] This restoration of human nature becomes possible under communism once there is a radical transformation of the social order which carries with it the abolition of private property and the removal of the material restrictions which are responsible

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[21]Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961), p. 69.

[22]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 155.

[23]Gustav A. Wetter, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

for this estrangement. The transformation is not so radical that it ignores the cultural wealth of the past, but rather men express their sociality by accepting and assimilating more completely the enrichment of past generations. The free man under communism is truly universal in his attitude toward mankind in that he identifies himself with the entire human race, recognizing that their legacy furnishes the only possible foundation for future advancements. Communism, says Marx, "is, therefore, the return of man himself as a *social*, i.e. really human, being, a complete and conscious return which assimilates all the wealth of previous generations."[24] H. P. Adams elucidates the Marxian view of man under communism:

> Only as a social being is man capable of self-realization. Man creates himself as a social being, and so creates his fellow-men. They are there for each other and by means of each other, and only as whole men, not as when driven down to the level on which only animal needs are satisfied, but active in knowledge and virtue; alive to art, they humanize external nature by scientific and artistic assimilation or spiritualization.[25]

Communism "is the *definitive* resolution of the antagonism between man and nature, and between man and man."[26] The antagonism between man and nature is resolved through the concrete practical activity of man who puts into the objects he creates his substance, that which is essential in him, and thereby enters integrally into the external world. No longer a stranger to the products of his labor, man is enabled to find himself and his fellow

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[24]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*,p. 155.

[25]H. P. Adams, *Karl Marx In His Earlier Writings* (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1965), pp. 111, 112.

[26]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*,p. 155.

man once more in those products and to experience the world of things and men as his creation. The complete integration of man into his natural environment thus brings about his complete integration into his social environment. Man accordingly achieves a reality in conformity with his true nature.

Communism "is the true solution of the conflict between existence and essence."[27] Marx's analysis of capitalism discloses a discordancy between present-day reality and the true nature of man. The human essence, that which is common to all men, never expressed itself in the unity of all men under capitalism but rather manifested itself in social conflict, in antagonisms between men. The root of this, Marx holds, is in disruptive labor practices which reduce man to a commodity level. The liberation of labor under communism means that there appears for the first time in human history a harmony between man's everyday existence and his true nature. Man comes to manifest in practice what he is according to his generic constitution. Man thus generates himself such that his existence provides the matrix for the conquest of his essence, of his humanization. The resolution of this conflict between existence and essence gives to man the unchallenged mastery of his own nature.

Communism "is the true solution of the conflict . . . between objectification and self-affirmation."[28] The social order based on

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[27]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[28]*Ibid.*

private property is an order of estranged, alienated labor wherein the nature of man, which he has externalized in the product of his labor, is not recovered but remains alienated from him. Man becomes ever weaker in himself the more he projects himself into an object independent of him; labor which remains divided from man's nature becomes, in the shape of capital, a means to his enervation and oppression.[29] Under communism there is a recovery of the self so alienated in material production, that is, there is a getting rid of the fact that man regards the product he has created as something that does not belong to him. The objectification of man in his products attests to man his true self. Man accordingly attains mastery over nature which in turn coincides with his own humanization.

Communism "is the true solution of the conflict . . . between freedom and necessity."[30] Under communism there is a "return of man himself as a *social* . . . being."[31] This flowering of human sociality affords man the opportunity to satisfy his needs in a manner consonant with his nature. In Marx's view the capitalist social order deprives man of his needs, for "every man speculates upon creating a *new* need in another in order to force him to a new sacrifice."[32] Also, "every new product is a new potentiality of mutual deceit and robbery. Man becomes increasingly poor as a man; he has increasing need of *money* in order to take possession

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[29]Gustav A. Wetter, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[30]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.* p. 155

[31]*Ibid.*

[32]*Ibid.*, p. 168.

of the hostile being."[33] This exploitation of human needs under capitalism is linked with the enfeeblement of human efforts at sociality, for "every real need is a weakness which will draw the bird into the line. Universal exploitation of human communal life."[34] Communism abolishes the society based on the deprivation of needs and establishes a society which permits an access to a real universality of needs and to a universality of goods to satisfy them. The human is viewed in one respect by Marx as a being whose needs multiply indefinitely and as a being capable of satisfying those needs by his material productive activities. This concept is disclosed in *The German Ideology:*

> The second fundamental point is that as soon as a need is satisfied, (which implies the action of satisfying, and the acquisition of an instrument), new needs are made; and this production of new needs is the first historical act.[35]

The evolution of man as a social being parallels the satisfaction of his needs. Capitalistic economic production reduces all his needs to an abstract need, namely the need for money.[36] That which is hindered under capitalism becomes a reality in the free society, namely that man is free to become ultimately the master of his needs.

Finally, communism "is the true solution of the conflict . . .

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[33]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 168.

[34]*Ibid.*, p. 169

[35]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, pp. 16, 17.

[36]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 168.

between individual and species."[37] In that society where human labor is liberated from the fetters of private property man's species life is absorbed into the individual. The existence of a coercive state under capitalism expressed the alienation of man's species life. Marx writes in his essay, "On the Jewish Question":

> The perfected political state is, by its nature, the species-life of man as opposed to his material life. All the presuppositions of this egoistic life continue to exist in *civil society outside* the political sphere, as qualities of civil society. Where the political state has attained to its full development, man leads, not only in thought, in consciousness, but in *reality*, in *life*, a double existence—celestial and terrestrial.[38]

What each man ought himself to express in everyday life is transferred under capitalism to the authoritative state. Communism restores to the individual the ultimate source of human government. Sociality then becomes a reality not due to the imposition of such by the state but because every man realizes his individuality according to all the dimensions of the species. There remains no longer an antagonistic distinction between individual being and species being. The realization of the species is achieved in the realization of the individual and *vice versa*. This unity between the individual and species means for Marx that the individual is not sacrificed to the species but that the species becomes the matrix for self-realization.

How does Marx's concept of labor relate to his idea of communism

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[37]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[38]*Ibid.*, p. 13.

since the term "labor" is not used in his most precise definition? The link can be found in his use of the terms "private property" and "human alienation" which are prominent concepts in his definition of communism. For Marx private property is the "material and sensuous expression of *alienated human* life."[39] Since Marx situates human alienation in the labor process, it can be said that for him private property visibly expresses what has gone wrong in man's natural activity, which is free and conscious labor. Thus the abolition of 'human self-alienation' means the abolition of alienated labor.

Marx aludes to the connection between private property and alienated labor when he criticizes the inadequate expressions of communism which were being advanced in his day. "Crude" communism, as he called them, perceived correctly that private property was linked to human alienation and thus to human emancipation, but it did not understand the actual nature of private property which is alienated labor. It is in this light that he expresses these critical remarks: "since it ('crude' communism) has not yet grasped the positive nature of private property, or the *human* nature of needs, it is still captured and contaminated by private property. It has well understood the concept, but not the essence."[40] The essence of private property is alienated labor; therefore, to call for the abolition of private property means for Marx to abolish its source, namely, alienated labor. One further connection between labor and communism

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[39]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

[40]*Ibid.*, p. 155.

is suggested by a statement in which he indicates the general way in which communism is to become effective. He says for instance: "The supersession of self-estrangement follows the same course as self-estrangement."[41] In this statement the "supersession of self-estrangement" means communism and "self-estrangement" denotes the human condition under capitalism. The general course or direction which communism follows parallels that of capitalism. In other words, the thought of this statement, within the context of his discussion, is that communism reckons directly with the fundamental evil of capitalism which is alienated labor, and it furthermore prepares a social order in which what was denied under capitalism is permitted full development under communism. Free and conscious labor was denied man under capitalism, and communism is that society of free men where productive forces reflect a fruitful relationship between man and nature and between man and man.

Under communism the specific manifestations of alienated labor which enfeebled man under capitalism will be overcome, transcended, in this new mode of living. Marx does not retrace his delineation of alienated labor and demonstrate how man will be free from the specific meanings he originally ascribed to it. He apparently assumes that the details of such a reversal or transcendence of alienation are understandable without undue elaboration. For instance, the claim is made in his concluding remarks on "Alienated Labor" in the *Manuscripts* that

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[41]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 152.

emanicpation from alienated labor will result in the emancipation of all people.

> From the relation of alienated labour to private property it also follows that the emancipation of society from private property, from servitude, takes the political form of the *emancipation of the workers;* not in the sense that only the latter's emancipation is involved, but because this emancipation includes the emancipation of humanity as a whole. For all human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and all the types of servitude are only modifications or consequences of this relation.[42]

It seems then that Marx considers that his explication of alienated labor has proceeded in such a fashion that its opposite, namely liberated labor, does not need a detailed amplification. A similar point of view is evident in the third manuscript where he deals in depth with his concept of communism:

> We have seen how, on the assumption that private property has been positively superseded, man produces man, himself and then other man; how the object which is the direct activity of his personality is at the same time his existence for other men and their existence for him.[43]

Marx again provides no concrete detail regarding the specific arrangement of labor in the free society. No new dimension to his concept of labor is added in his development of the concept of communism which was not previously suggested in his delineation of alienated labor: it is by man's liberated labor that he can realize his full potential as a human, realize a fruitful relation between himself and nature.

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[42]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 132, 133.

[43]*Ibid.*, p. 159.

Marx's major concern in his philosophical treatment of communism in the *Manuscripts*, it seems, is to elucidate the human dimensions of a society in which men are at liberty to produce in a manner becoming to their humanity. He considers, among others, the problem of the individual over against the collective or the problem of the one and the many, and how this problem can be resolved under communism.

The Community and the Individual

The problem of the community versus the individual finds its resolution in the proper relationships of human labor. In the first place Marx connects the de-alienation of labor with the social nature of communism:

> The material of labor and man himself as a subject are the starting point as well as the result of this movement (and because there must be this starting point private property is a historical necessity). Therefore, the *social* character is the universal character of the whole movement; *as* society itself produces *man* as *man*, so it is produced by him.[44]

It must be noted here that the human experience under capitalism or private property are necessary in order that men may come to apprehend the essence of communism—these foundations are simply the negations of those of capitalism. The "material of labour" and "man" himself are indicated here as being fundamental to communism. This it seems is equivalent to saying that nature and man are fundamental. It was observed in the previous chapter that Marx's analysis of capitalism reveals the basic rupture between man and nature and that from this

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[44]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

crucial relation all other manifestations of human disintegration could be traced. The cause for the divorce between man and nature was alienated labor—that activity which disintegrated rather than unified man. The historical necessity for capitalism can now be seen in that man in the person of the proletariat finally arrives at the consciousness that his productive activities disrupt the fruitful relation with nature which he normally should realize. A consciousness of this fundamental divorce between itself and nature alerts the proletariat to the elementary components of its misery which in itself suggests a remedy—negate alienated labor and man becomes free to realize a fruitful relationship with nature. Communism then builds upon a fruitful relationship between man and nature, for the goal of communism is the maximum realization of the fecundity of that relation. The discussion at this point brings to light an important assumption underlying his perspective—the relation man sustains with nature through his labor determines the character of all human relationships. If the relation is marked by excessive alienation, then one has capitalism with all its evils. If the relation is marked by freedom, then one has communism with all its promise for human achievement. One great benefit of communism which Marx hopes to disclose is that it ushers in a "social" system of production which is favorable to man's reconciliation with nature and with others.

That communism is basically the reconciliation of man and nature which manifests itself in the reconciliation of men illumines according to Marx an essential ingredient of the movement, namely, that it is

social in nature. After showing that a reconciliation of man results from a reconciliation of man and nature, he thereby concludes that communism is social: "Therefore, the *social* character is the universal character of the whole movement; *as* society itself produces *man* as *man* so it is produced by him."[45] He reinforces this contention by considering two human factors that count in any social order—human actions and human intelligence. The consequence of a fruitful relation between activity, intelligence, and nature is the creation of a social order conducive to what Marx considers to be true human development.

> Activity and mind are social in their content as well as in their *origin*; they are *social* activity and social mind. The *human* significance of nature only exists for *social* man, because only in this case is nature a *bond* with other *men*, the basis of his existence for others and of their existence for him. Only then is nature the *basis* of his own *human* experience and a vital element of human reality. The *natural* existence of man has here become his *human* existence and nature itself has become human for him. Thus *society* is the accomplished union of man with nature, the veritable resurrection of nature, the realized naturalism of man and the realized humanism of nature.[46]

The social quality of communism here means that man functions in his productive activities with a full awareness of his generic bond with others. Productive relations accordingly must never be egoistic but must be the kind of relation where the individual experiences in the production of objects a sense of identity with his species. It is exactly in the product and in the activity of producing it that man

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[45]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

[46]*Ibid.*

expresses his uniqueness as a human species. His product then contains something more than an expression of his individual faculties and powers; it also reflects the generic determinations of his species. Only under communism does the product of labor truly reflect this social quality since capitalism negates this dimension and reduces man to animality. Under communism a fruitful relation with nature cements men together in mutual accord. Nature here refers to 'transformed' nature which in this context means that labor relations bind men together into a harmonious community rather than one marked by hostility. Communism becomes for Marx that social order which is "the accomplished union of man with nature, the veritable resurrection of nature, the realized naturalism of man and the realized humanism of nature."[47]

The reification of exclusive and unsociable institutions under capitalism disappear under communism and only "human society" remains.

> Private property is . . . the expression of *alienated human* life. . . . Religion, the family, the state, law, morality, science, art, etc. are only *particular* forms of production and come under its general law. The positive supersession of *private property*, as the appropriation of *human* life, is, therefore, the positive supersession of all alienation, and the return of man from religion, the family, the state, etc. to his human, i.e. social life.[48]

Under capitalism the species-man is in conflict with himself and with others; this results not only in the social division of labor but in a universal division among men. These divisions manifest themselves in

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[47]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

[48]*Ibid.*, p. 156.

antagonisms which are reified in institutions. These antagonisms pervade every pore of society as was noted earlier. Communism then signifies the advent of harmony within humanity at large. This associated kind of society is the society Marx cryptically refers to in his tenth thesis on Feuerbach: "The standpoint of the old type of materialism is civil society, the standpoint of the new materialism is human society or social humanity."[49]

Erich Fromm's interpretation of what Marx means by "human society" is helpful. Fromm uses the term "socialism" instead of "communism" but what he means by it is Marx's concept of communism.

> Socialism returned to the idea of the "good society" as the condition for the realization of man's spiritual needs. It was anti-authoritarian, both as far as the Church *and* the State are concerned, hence it aimed at the eventual disappearance of the state and at the establishment of a society composed of voluntarily co-operating individuals. Its aim was a reconstruction of society in such a way as to make it the basis for man's true return to himself, *without* the presence of those authoritarian forces which restricted and impoverished man's mind.[50]

The significant characteristics of this society are freedom and harmony and the precondition for its establishment is the removal of coercive forces of the kind reified in institutions under capitalism which suppress one sector of society for the advantage of the other.

After showing that one of the essential aspects of communism is its social dimension, Marx rejoins by showing that the movement never-

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[49]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 199.

[50]Erich Fromm, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

theless gives deference to the individual in spite of its strong emphasis on communal living. The social quality of the movement does indeed receive prime stress in his treatment of communism, for he emphatically states that "*society* is the accomplished union of man with nature, the veritable resurrection of nature, the realized naturalism of man and the realized humanism of nature."[51] Marx's role for the individual, it will be seen, is significant, but individualism is never associated with the concept of communism in such a definitive manner as is collectivism. He enlarges upon the importance of the individual in the first instance by showing that the idea of a "social activity and a social mind" does not negate the salience of individuals:

> Social activity and social mind by no means exist *only* in the form of activity or mind which is directly communal. Nevertheless, communal activity and mind, i.e. activity and mind which express and confirm themselves directly in a *real association* with other men, occur everywhere where this direct expression of sociability arises from the content of the activity or corresponds to the nature of mind.[52]

In other words, communal activity can be performed in ways other than by the direct association of people in a group for an individual in his private endeavors also performs a social act. Marx draws attention to the work of a scientist to illustrate this point. He views the work of the scientist as a private endeavor, but even in this most private kind of activity the performance is social in character:

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[51]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

[52]*Ibid.*

> Even when I carry out *scientific* work, etc., an activity which I can seldom conduct in direct association with other men, I perform a *social,* because *human,* act. It is not only the material of my activity—such as the language itself which the thinker uses—which is given to me as a social product. My *own existence* is a social activity. For this reason, what I myself produce I produce for society, and with the consciousness of acting as a social being.[53]

Thus individual efforts can always be interpreted as a social act. A truly human act is a social act even though the act is never performed in direct association with others. This means for Marx that the human consciousness under communism always identifies itself in some sense with the community regardless of how private one's activities may be. Under capitalism man has indeed some sense of communal consciousness, but it remains an abstraction for him since there is no actual communal living that corresponds to his theoretical consciousness—society is not truly communal for it is split into antagonistic classes. Under communism the theoretical and the actual coexist in harmony which means that the antagonisms between man's theoretical consciousness and his actual life are resolved:

> My universal consciousness is only the *theoretical* form of that whose *living* form is the real community, the social entity, although at the present day this universal consciousness is an abstraction from real life and is opposed to it as an enemy. That is why the *activity* of my universal consciousness as such is my *theoretical* existence as a social being.[54]

On the one hand Marx tends to submerge the individual into the collective, but on the other hand he expressly warns against conceiving

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[53]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.,* pp. 157, 158.

[54]*Ibid.,* p. 158.

communism in such a way that the collective becomes a means to overpower the individual. Marx writes, for example: "It is above all necessary to avoid postulating 'society' once again as an abstraction confronting the individual. The individual *is* the *social being*."[55] The abolition of private property inaugurates a radically new social system of free individuals but not a "society" which overpowers the individual through becoming the master of the 'socialized' means of production. Individual life merges harmoniously with the species life—the individual is a microcosm of man's generic life.

> Individual human life and species-life are not different things, even though the mode of existence of individual life is necessarily either a more *specific* or a more *general* mode of species-life, or that of species-life a *specific* or more *general* mode of individual life.[56]

Marx here attaches significance to the individual in the sense that communal living only manifests itself through the individual and not through the reification of a state or "society" which may attempt to represent man's communal propensities. Communal living then is a community of individuals who within themselves have a sense of community responsibility without the necessity of some collective organization to enforce this sense of responsibility. This is all possible under communism because alienated labor, the fundamental cause of antagonisms between men, has been removed. When labor is liberated to perform its intended function, the necessity no longer exists for external authority to ensure

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[55]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*

[56]*Ibid.*

unison among men. In other words, the interests of the whole are fulfilled in the existence of every individual. In the capitalist society which is organized in the form of class-rule, the particular interests of the ruling class supercede the general interests of the whole of society, but in the communist society "it is no longer necessary to represent a particular interest as general or 'the general interest' as ruling."[57]

The prominence of the individual in Marx's perspective can be further elucidated by the fact that according to him the basic changes in this transformation from the alienated life of capitalism occur in the individual and not merely in the structure of the social order as such. There are indeed changes in the social order, but these are simply the creations of a free man. The whole point of Marx's analysis of capitalism was not to show that the basic error resided in the social and economic arrangements as such but rather to disclose the fact that alienation is located in the labor process—a condition of self-alienation. It is precisely alienated labor that has falsified man's whole being such that it has developed in him only the sense of possession or having. Marx advises that under communism this one-sidedness should not characterize human relations, for "the positive supersession of private property, i.e. the sensuous appropriation of the human essence and of human life, of objective man and of human *creations*, by and for man,

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[57]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 41.

should not be taken only in the sense of *immediate*, exclusive *enjoyment*, or only in the sense of *possession* or having."[58] Capitalism has devaluated man to such an extent that "the sense of having" dominates his human faculties and powers.

> Private property has made us so stupid and partial that an object is only ours when we have it, when it exists for us as capital or when it is directly eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc., in short, *utilized* in some way. But private property itself only conceives these various forms of possession as *means of life*, and the life for which they serve as means is the *life* of *private property*—labour and creation of capital. Thus *all* the physical and intellectual senses have been replaced by the simple alienation of *all* these senses: the sense of *having*.[59]

Capitalism then narrows man's perspective to that of "having," or to an egoistic, utilitarian outlook. Communism permits the enlargement of man's horizons such that his appropriation of the objects of labor contribute both to his humanization and to that of his species. Marx explains: "Man appropriates his manifold being in an all-inclusive way, and thus as a whole man."[60] This enlargement of the human's contact and control of nature is the change Marx envisions:

> All his *human* relations to the world—seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, thinking, observing, feeling, desiring, acting, loving--in short, all the organs of his individuality, like the organs which are directly communal in form, are in their objective action (their action in relation to the object) the appropriation of this object, the appropriation of human reality. The way in which they react to the object is the confirmation of *human reality*.[61]

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[58]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

[59]*Ibid.*, pp. 159, 160.

[60]*Ibid.*, p. 159.

[61]*Ibid.*

The appropriation of the objects of production can result in human self-realization because man sustains this broader, more comprehensive relation to the world. Capitalism reduces man to base merchandise whereas communism reverses this debilitation and makes human enrichment possible. Although capitalism enfeebles man, it serves a beneficial role as a kind of 'purgatory' that will in time give birth to communism, to human enrichment: "The human being had to be reduced to this absolute poverty in order to be able to give birth to all his inner wealth."[62] Communism affects above all else the individual since it is primarily the "complete *emancipation* of all human qualities and senses."[63]

Labor and Self-Change

How then do the mind and senses become modified under communism? The change is effected by the manner in which man objectifies himself in his labor. Marx comments upon his intention by speaking metaphorically of the human eye.

> The eye has become a *human* eye when its *object* has become a *human*, social object, created by man and destined for him. The senses have, therefore, become directly theoreticians in practice. They relate themselves to the thing for the sake of the thing, but the thing itself is an *objective human* relation to itself and to man, and vice versa. Need and enjoyment have thus lost their *egoistic* character and nature has lost its mere *utility* by the fact that its utilization has become *human* utilization.[64]

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[62]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

[63]*Ibid.* [64]*Ibid.*

This reference to the "eye" is apparently metaphorical since no allusion is made to a change in the anatomical structure of the eye. Furthermore, this "eye" must now avoid self-centeredness and a mere utilitarian outlook. This "eye" then is man's inner eye or basic orientation toward external objects. Liberated labor makes possible such an orientation so that the objects of man's creation appear as his creation for his self-realization and not as an alien and hostile power that enfeebles and overpowers him. When the "eye" perceives fecundity in the labor relation, this is a human "eye."

> It is evident that the human eye appreciates things in a different way from the crude, non-human eye, the human *ear* differently from the crude ear. As we have seen, it is only when the object becomes a *human* object, or objective *humanity*, that man does not become lost in it. This is only possible when man himself becomes a *social* object; when he himself becomes a social being and society becomes a being for him in this object. It is only when objective reality everywhere becomes for man in society the reality of human faculties, that all *objects* become for him the *objectification of himself*. It is only through the objectively deployed wealth of the human being that the wealth of subjective *human* sensibility (a musical ear, an eye which is sensitive to the beauty of form, in short, senses which are capable of human satisfaction and which confirm themselves as human faculties) is cultivated or created. For it is not only the five senses, but also the so-called spiritual senses, the practical senses (desiring, loving, etc.), in brief, human sensibility and the human character of the senses, which can only come into being through the existence of *its* object, through humanized nature.[65]

The humanization of man's inward being depends upon the free and conscious production of objects. It would seem that Marx's purpose in illustrating this teaching by using the physical eye in a metaphorical

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[65]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, pp. 160, 161.

sense is to suggest that eventually under the uninterrupted influence of communism men will actually and spontaneously "see," experience, the human dimension in their creations in as natural a way as the physical eye immediately identifies colors and shades.

This change that comes about in man is what Marx envisioned in his definition of communism where he asserts that it is "the real appropriation of human nature through man and for man."[66] The significant import of this statement is that man thus liberated posits himself as his principle and his end. Man's task is his humanization which is fulfilled according to the design and purpose of man himself. Communism accordingly removes all inhibitions and prohibitions that would prevent man from becoming in actual fact his own master, his own creator. It was the error of capitalism that it suppressed man's attempts to come to full stature.

> A being does not regard himself as independent unless he is his own master, and he is only his own master when he owes his existence to himself. A man who lives by the favour of another considers himself a dependent being. But I live completely by another person's favour when I owe to him not only the continuance of my life but also *its creation*; when he is *its source*. My life has necessarily such a cause outside itself if it is not my own creation.[67]

Marx posits man as his own creator and accordingly rejects the notion of a divine creation since science and logic demonstrate its implausibility.[68]

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[66]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[67]*Ibid.*, p. 165. [68]*Ibid.*, pp. 165, 166.

The means for accomplishing this creative task, Marx believes, is possible only by practical activity. Man appropriates his nature basically by his labor, for labor is the mediator between man and nature whereby man becomes himself through the coincidence of his existence and essence. Labor becomes the means for man's exaltation of himself as his own creator.

> Since, however, for socialist man, the *whole of what is called world history* is nothing but the creation of man by human labour, and the emergence of nature for man, he, therefore, has the evident and irrefutable proof of his *self-creation*, of his own *origins*. Once the essence of man and of nature, man as a natural being and nature as a human reality, has become evident in practical life, in sense experience, the quest for an *alien* being, a being above man and nature (a quest which is an avowal of the unreality of man and nature) becomes impossible in practice.[69]

Not only the era of communism but the whole of human history is a process of self-creation. Man was realizing himself under capitalism even though his creative efforts resulted in an increasing devalorization, but under communism human efforts are marked by their fecundity. In such a liberating social order the existence and essence of man are reconciled. This reconciliation will be realized only in a practical manner, and the evidence that a reconciliation has occurred likewise appears in the practical life of people. The practical consequence of this reconciliation is that man no longer is in the quest for capital, an alien being, but rather he actively pursues the task of his own humanization because he has finally become the unsallied master of his own nature.

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[69]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, pp. 166, 167.

Accordingly, the aim of communism, Marx advises, is not the reification of communism itself but the advancement of humanity.

> Communism is the phase of negation of the negation and is, consequently, for the next stage of historical development, a real and necessary factor in the emancipation and rehabilitation of man. Communism is the necessary form and the dynamic principle of the immediate future, but communism is not itself the goal of human development—the form of human society.[70]

Erich Fromm comments in more specific terms what this entails. "It is," he says, "to create a form of production and an organization of society in which man can overcome alienation from his product, from his work, from his fellow man, from himself and from nature; in which he can return to himself and grasp the world with his own powers thus becoming one with the world."[71] These comments are suggestive of another aspect of Marx's definition of communism in which he claims that it is "the true solution of the conflict . . . between objectification and self-affirmation."[72] The self-objectification of man in his labor under capitalism does not confirm to man his essence because the object of production becomes another's possession, but under communism the product belongs to the producer and he sees in it a reflection of himself--he can become his own object since the object of production becomes an expression of his humanity. In the reconciliation of self-objectification and self-affirmation man herein becomes the master of nature itself in

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[70]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 167.

[71]Erich Fromm, *op. cit.*, pp. 58, 59.

[72]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 155.

that nature is at his disposal to realize his own humanization through the humanization of nature.

The possibility of self-realization in this future society becomes also attainable due to a reconciliation of human freedom and necessity, for communism is "the true solution of the conflict . . . between freedom and necessity."[73] Although there is an apparent service to the needs of man under capitalism, it turns out upon the basis of Marx's analysis that only man's biological needs are actually met and furthermore many false needs are created and satisfied to man's disfavor. In the capitalist system man becomes increasingly poor despite the fact that capitalism only thrives on the premise that human needs increase and production must keep pace. The result of this proliferation of needs and products under this system is that man "has increasing need of *money* in order to take possession of the hostile being. . . . The need for money is, therefore, the real need created by the modern economic system, and the only need which it creates."[74] The creation of the need for money alone represents a falsification of truly human needs. Man's true needs are satisfied under communism, and they are "those whose fulfillment is necessary for the realization of his essence as a human being."[75] When man attains his true needs, he is said to be

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[73]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 155.

[74]*Ibid.*, p. 168.

[75]Erich Fromm, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

a truly wealthy man according to Marx:

> It will be seen from this how, in place of *wealth* and *poverty* of political economy, we have the *wealthy* man and the plenitude of *human* need. The wealthy man is at the same time one who *needs* a complex of human manifestations of life, and whose own self-realization exists as an inner necessity, a need.[76]

Communism also recognizes that human needs are numerous and complex and become increasingly so, but these needs are always fulfilled in accordance with an inner necessity—the need to realize oneself in the fulfillment of needs. It must be noted that for Marx the attainment of these truly human needs occurs only after biological needs have been satisfied. This is the element of necessity which never disappears even in communism, but the possibility for the realization of man's true needs, over and above those of biological necessity, is held to be unlimited in the free society. Marx specifies in some detail what is entailed in man's mastery over his needs in *Capital* III:

> In fact, the realm of freedom does not commence until the point is passed where labor under the compulsion of necessity and of external utility is required. In the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of material production in the strict meaning of the term. Just as the savage must wrestle with nature, in order to maintain his life and reproduce it, so civilized man has to do it, and he must do it in all forms of society and under all possible modes of production. With his development the realm of natural necessity expands, because his wants increase; but at the same time the forces of production increase, by which these wants are satisfied. The freedom in this field cannot consist of anything else but of the fact that socialized man, the associated producers, regulate their interchange with nature rationally, bring it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by some blind power;

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[76]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, pp. 164, 165.

> that they accomplish their task with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most adequate to their human nature and most worthy of it. But it always remains a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that development of human power, which is its own end, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can flourish only upon that realm of necessity as its basis.[77]

The essential elements for the mastery of human needs are delineated here. In the first place man produces in an associated and not in a competitive way. He also produces rationally and not in an alienated, irrational manner which enfeebles the human intellect. Because the worker produces as the master of production and never becomes a slave to the system, he can ultimately conquer all his needs. Man's chief end in production then is to "begin to make living his main business, rather than producing the *means* for living."[78] Man remains a being of necessity but with the potential to attain freely his true needs over and above those of necessity—this realm of true needs is man's realm of freedom. This means that man through his labor in the realm of freedom becomes master of his needs such that there is in practice a reconciliation of the conflict between freedom and necessity. The ultimate end in resolving this and other fundamental conflicts is that man may proceed unhindered with the dual task of humanizing nature for his own humanization through the medium of labor. When this transpires, then "communism as a fully developed naturalism is humanism and as a fully developed humanism is naturalism."[79]

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[77]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1909), pp. 954, 955.

[78]Erich Fromm, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

[79]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

CHAPTER VI

MORAL VALUES AND LABOR

The Marxian analysis of capitalism pictures man as morally debilitated due to the effects of alienated labor. His vision of communism depicts man in a condition to live freely and harmoniously according to the determinations of his species, which means that man lives a morally upright life. His general perspective of the evolutionary development of man accordingly represents man as a morally responsible being who makes his own history.[1] The ultimate consequence of alienation was shown to be the reduction of man to base merchandise; that of communism, the exaltation of man so that he attains to full stature due to his own creative efforts at humanizing nature for his own humanization.

The primary concern of this chapter is to discover the link Marx makes between human labor and moral values, but any endeavor to elucidate Marx's concept of values is fraught with difficulty because he never treated it in any systematic manner. His polemic style of writing does not favor the reader who searches for precise definitions. As Thomas Sowell recognizes: "Almost everything from the pen of Karl Marx was polemical; he wrote nothing that simply set forth his own views systematically. One consequence of this was that his differences with his opponents largely determined the subject matter and emphasis of his

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[1]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. B. T. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 166.

writing."[2] Eugene Kamenka succinctly analyzes the difficulties encountered in grasping Marxian ethics in his book, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism.*

> Marx himself wrote nothing devoted directly to the problems of moral philosophy. Nowhere did he analyse critically the meaning of the moral terms or the basis of ethical distinctions; nowhere did he consider carefully the concept of moral obligation or the criteria for distinguishing moral demands from other demands. He did, it is true, emphatically reject the conception of ethics as a normative science; he denied completely the existence of 'values,' 'norms' and 'ideals' above or outside the empirical realm of facts. He prided himself that he had not asked what *ought* to be, but only what *is*. Yet the answers he gave to his question have seemed to many of his disciples and critics implicitly ethical and/or advocative. He called feudalism a state of bondage; he describes the dehumanization of the worker under capitalism in terms highly reminiscent of ethical writing; he identified the empirical culmination of history with the emergence of 'rational' and 'truly intelligible' human relations. Many of the 'contradictions' that play so large a part in his exposure of capitalism smack of moral as well as logical 'contradictions.' His life and work seem to proclaim a unity of theory and practice, of science and advocacy, that characterises the ethical *Weltanschauung* rather than the positive 'value-free' science. Even his own disciples seem uncertain whether Marx revolutionised the foundations of ethics or showed that it could have no foundation.[3]

Despite these apparent difficulties one is impressed with the intensely moralistic tone of this thought. Moral values undoubtedly lay at the foundation of his denouncement of capitalism and its attendant evils—all of which suggests that Marx's thought depends significantly upon a system of moral values even though he did not explicitly develop one. The

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[2]Thomas Sowell, "Karl Marx and the Freedom of the Individual," *Ethics*, LXXIII (January, 1963), 120. This generalization by Sowell is too extreme: for example, much of Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* are philosophical in style and attempt to delineate his views systematically.

[3]Eugene Kamenka, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 1.

problem is complicated further by his own rejection of absolute moral values.[4] Robert C. Tucker indicates that such denunciations do not detract from the fact that Marx's thought is governed by underlying value judgements:

> Although he disclaims the intention to moralize, his portrait of the world in the *Communist Manifesto, Capital,* and other writings is manifestly the portrait of a world felt to be wrong and evil in its basic constitution. It is a world that stands morally condemned in the eyes of the portrait painter, a world awaiting merited destruction at the hands of its 'grave-digger,' the proletarian.[5]

Tucker, along with Kamenka and others represent a newer trend of thought regarding the ethical content of Marx's perspective which was not shared by a number of the leading interpreters in the older Marxian tradition. For example, Karl Kautsky, a leading theorist of German Marxism after Engel's death, held that the teachings of Marx appeared to him to be ethically empty and accordingly assumed the task of endowing Marxism with some ethical content.[6] The contemporary Western literature does however abound in statements regarding the existence and the significance of its ethical content.

Labor and Moral Values

Marx's perspective of the history of man as a natural being whose

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[4]Vernon Venable, *Human Nature: The Marxian View* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), pp. 207, 208.

[5]Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 15.

[6]Karl Kautsky, *Ethics and the Materialistic Conception of History,* trans. John B. Askew (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1918), p. 202.

relationship with nature and others is determined by the character of his labor relations tells a story of how man has made bad history reaching its climax in capitalism and of how man will ultimately make good history when communism, the society of free men, has been realized. In other words, the history of man's natural activity is the history of a moral struggle. For Marx this struggle rages primarily at the practical level and not at the theoretical. This suggests that for him ethics is essentially a matter of practice, for men are not in his view to be judged by their preconceptions but according to their actions. Marx writes: "Just as our opinion of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness; on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production."[7] That Marx's approach to ethics is concerned with the practical is recognized by Vernon Venable:

> Just as human nature is to be judged by what men are and do rather than what they think themselves to be, so men's ethics are to be judged neither by the formal propriety of their precepts nor by the motives they profess, but by the chain of historical consequences which their thoughts and actions in fact inaugurate. If an ethical program is without positive, progressive effect, its effect is negative, and to this extent reactionary. Utopian panaceas, insofar as they divert the human energies of their adherents from genuinely constructive action, or mislead masses of people by arousing unrealized hopes, are to this extent unethical, however much moral earnestness and humanistic fervour motivate their proponents.[8]

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[7]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), p. 363.

[8]Vernon Venable, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

The crucial consideration in history is human activity, and labor is man's natural and most significant activity. It is in this activity then that man's moral struggle manifests itself most significantly. In this struggle the act of world history is portrayed as a moral story of man's loss of himself in *alienated* labor and as a recovery of himself in *liberated* labor.

Although Marx does not deal with his view of human labor in the traditional terms of a moral philosopher, a consideration of his concept of labor indicates that moral values occupy an important aspect of this concept. It has been shown that human activity is fundamentally labor which is precisely the mediator between man and nature and between man and his species. It is through labor that man appropriates nature as well as his own nature. Labor is therefore that unifying factor in human creative efforts, and it accordingly has for Marx an ethical meaning, that is, one at the level of human realization as such. By the fact that man exists he is confronted with the task of his humanization, his naturalization, which means for Marx the coincidence of his existence and his essence. It may be said then that Marx points to a moral task for man, and this task is realized fundamentally by human labor. These remarks further suggest that Marx does not conceive of moral values apart from a concrete situation in life, or it may be stated that for Marx it is only in relation to human activity that moral goodness has any real significance.

An examination of his concept of labor as delineated in the previous chapters of this study discloses what it is that has moral value and moral disvalue for Marx. In the first instance Marx believes that his concept of

labor elucidates the source of human devalorization—that which reduces man to a commodity. The cause of this condition, Marx discovers, is alienated labor. His analysis of man's plight can be interpreted in moral terms such that the evil is alienation and the source of that evil is situated "in the *relations* of production that have underlain human association."[9] Eugene Kamenka, for example, associates the debilitating effects of capitalism with Marx's notion of moral disvalue. He says: "It makes man into a *commodity*. Precisely in that, for Marx, lies its absolute moral evil."[10]

Criteria for Moral Judgment

The next and more significant question is by what criteria does Marx judge alienated labor to be evil? His reasons, as already investigated, for situating human alienation in the labor process brings to light his basic standards for moral judgment. These criteria will be stated at the outset, then their link with his concept of labor follows. The criteria for what is ultimately moral are freedom and harmony. Kamenka explains the meaning Marx gives to these standards.

> For Marx, freedom meant self-determination in accordance with one's inner constitution; it meant not being determined from without, by one's relations to other things, but by the logical principle of one's own development. Harmony meant above all the lack of inner contradiction, in that curious Hegelian sense of contradiction that confuses it with exclusion and treats is as a character of—imperfect—existing things, thus holding that

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[9]Vernon Venable, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

[10]Eugene Kamenka, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

> two contradictories may be 'partially' true and both exist. Since contradiction is held to be the necessary basis of historical change, the truly harmonious is also the stable, the ultimately durable. It represents the truly real as against the 'mere' dependently existing thing which, by its dependence, is not itself. To be truly self-determined and free from contradiction is to be truly real and truly good. To exhibit dependence (determination from without), division, instability, and 'self-contradiction' is to fall short, to be evil in a sense that sees evil merely as a negative appearance, a one-sidedness, rather than as a positive quality.[11]

Marx employs these criteria for moral judgment in his analysis of human labor. Not only does he utilize them in his general assessment of alienated labor which under capitalism reduces man to a commodity, but his use of these criteria is also evident in the specific reasons advanced for alienated labor. In review, the specific reasons he furnishes to account for alienated labor are as follows: alienated labor separates man 1) from his product, ii) from his natural activity, iii) from his species being and nature, iv) from other men. An investigation of these particular reasons discloses the connection Marx makes between human labor and moral values.

Man as a natural being achieves freedom by his labor when the objects of his production become for him his reality. The realization of freedom in the labor process is accordingly reckoned a good. Marx evidently denounces that form of labor relation which separates man from his product as a moral disvalue because it impinges upon man's free access to his product and disrupts the harmonious relation he should

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[11]Eugene Kamenka, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

sustain with nature. That Marx evaluates the moral value of this situation with the criterion of freedom is evidenced by an explicit statement of his: "Thus in this double respect the worker becomes a slave to his object."[12] Marx believes that man must be the master over his productive efforts, but he contends that the converse is in fact the case in a commodity orientated system where man becomes dominated by his products—they are his masters and appear to the worker as an alien, hostile power. Another statement by Marx reinforces this thought; he says, for example, that it is "the relation of the worker to the *product of labour* as an alien object exercising power over him. This relation is at the same time the relation to the sensuous external world, to the objects of nature as an alien world antagonistically opposed to him."[13] The separation of the product from the worker is a moral disvalue then because the dispossession of his product imposes a limit and a fetter upon him—there is a loss of freedom. The latter part of the above quotation points to the rupture between man and nature which also characterizes estrangement. According to Marx, man objectifies himself in his objects of production. The product embodies personal powers such that it confirms to man who he is—it is a manifestation of his essence. Labor to that end ought to sustain a fruitful relationship between man and nature, but in reality the opposite relation prevails

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[12]Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. M. Milligan (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959), p. 71.

[13]*Ibid.*, p. 73.

in capitalism since the relation is marked by antagonism. Here the matter resolves to one in which harmony between man and nature is disjunctive and it for this reason affects man disfavorably. Harmony in this consideration presents itself as the criterion employed by Marx to appraise moral value.

Man's natural activity ought to contribute to his self-realization. The fecundity of liberated labor manifests itself in the growth of the human personality, for "productive life is, however, species-life. It is life creating life."[14] When man produces freely and consciously, he acts in harmony with his species type. Such labor practice that enhances personal development is accordingly a moral good. Marx's fulmination against the aspect of alienation which separates man from his natural activity stems from the fact that for him such a separation subjugates man to external, coercive powers which means a loss of man by himself. Marx writes:

> What constitutes the alienation of labour? First, that the work is *external* to the worker, that it is not part of his nature; and that, consequently, he does not fulfil himself in his work but denies himself, has a feeling of misery rather than well-being, does not develop freely his mental and physical energies but is physically exhausted and mentally debased.[15]

Here Marx rejects the subjugation of man to an external determination, to something that was not a form of his essence. Freedom and self-determination become linked in this case as a single standard of judgment in that any

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[14]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 127.

[15]*Ibid.*, pp. 124, 125.

practice which carries with it the subjugation of man to an external determination is an evil. Alienated labor in this instance deprives man of his freedom of purpose and of the opportunity for self-actualization by imposing the will of another upon him.

> His work is not voluntary but imposed, *forced labour*. It is not the satisfaction of a need, but only a *means* for satisfying other needs. Its alien character is clearly shown by the fact that as soon as there is no physical or other compulsion it is avoided like the plague. External labour, labour in which man alienates himself, is a labour of self-sacrifice, of mortification. . . . in work he does not belong to himself but to another person.[16]

Man is simply not in a position in a capitalistic system to decide meaningfully upon the nature and purpose of his labor; this loss of freedom is thus a moral disvalue. The harmony which man should normally sustain between his inner purposes and his physical exertions becomes disjointed--the purpose of labor belongs to another, making the worker a mere means. The criterion of harmony applies here not to an objective relation but to a subjective relation, for it is a matter between man's inward being and the overt expression of self in practice. The disvalue accrues from the fact that there is, as it were, a split in his personality. Man should be an active virile, creative being, but instead he becomes passive, powerless, emasculated:

> This relation is the relation of the worker to his own activity as an alien activity not belonging to him; it is activity as suffering, strength as weakness, begetting as emasculating, the worker's *own* physical and mental energy, his personal life or what is life other than activity—as an activity which is turned against him, neither depends

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[16]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*,p. 125.

> on nor belongs to him. Here we have *self-estrangement*, as we had previously the estrangement of the *thing*.[17]

Man then must not become a victim of circumstances but rather master of them. Both freedom and harmony thus serve as criteria to determine the moral value of this aspect of alienated labor.

The separation of man from his species being and nature is also an alienation, an evil, according to Marx, when judged by the criteria of freedom and harmony. It is consonant with man's generic determinations that he produces freely, consciously and universally. Alienated labor suppresses man's attempts to be himself, to identify himself with his species being by limiting in the first instance his actual grasp of material objects to those which satisfy only his animal needs.

> While, therefore, alienated labour takes away the object of production from man, it also takes away his *species-life*, his real objectivity as a species-being, and changes his advantage over animals into a disadvantage in so far as his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him.[18]

Alienated labor further limits the kind of activities in which he may engage to those which aim at physical existence only:

> Just as alienated labour transforms free and self-directed activity into a means, so it transforms the species-life of man into a means of physical existence.[19]

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[17]Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, op. cit.*, pp. 73, 74.

[18]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 128.

[19]*Ibid.*

Man is thus hindered from engaging in those activities which aim at the humanization of nature for the humanization of man and is accordingly destined through alienation only to those activities which minister to his physical needs. Since man is thwarted in his attempts to participate in those productive activities unique to his species, he suffers a loss of identity with his kind. Generic life no longer means his realization as a man, but rather his tutelage to animality. Alienated labor also produces an antagonism between the individual and his species which dislocates man from his sense of community and amplifies his self-interestedness. Marx writes:

> Alienated labor . . . makes *species-life* into a means of individual life. In the first place it alienates species-life and individual life, and secondly, it turns the latter, as an abstraction, into the purpose of the former, also in its abstract and alienated form. . . . In the type of life activity resides the whole character of a species, its species-character; and free, conscious activity is the species-character of human beings. Life itself appears only as a *means of life*.[20]

Man is inhibited from producing actively, freely, and consciously according to the elections of his species; therefore, this lack of freedom is a moral disvalue for Marx. His activity further disrupts the harmony he ought to sustain with his species. The criteria for judging the moral value of a situation are given again as those of freedom and harmony.

Finally, alienated labor separates man from his fellow men which is judged a moral evil by Marx on the criteria of harmony and freedom. Marx views man as a social being who attains sociality by means of his

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[20]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

labor. The attainment of sociality or of mutual accord among men is thus held as a moral good. It has been shown in some detail that the character of human labor relations determines the character of all other human relations. For instance Marx writes:

> What applies to a man's relation to his work, to the product of his labour and to himself, also holds of a man's relation to the other man, and to the other man's labour and object of labour. . . . Hence within the relation of estranged labour each man views the other in accordance with the standard and the position in which he finds himself as a worker.[21]

Alienated labor relations are here analyzed by Marx as evil. The influence which this relation has upon all human relations is accounted evil on the basis of the same standards of judgment. In the first place alienated labor produces a fundamental conflict in society by creating antagonistic classes—the laboring class versus the capitalist class. In this significant divorce in human society man is divided against himself, and he is thereby limited to the determinations of a particular class. All humanity is not his field of association and influence, for he in fact is only free within the limitations imposed by his class. Furthermore, he is subjugated, in the case of the worker, to the rule and morality of the dominant class.[22] The chief enemies of a truly unified humanity are special interests, privilege and class, all of which elevate social divisions into a principle of social organization.[23]

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[21]Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, op. cit.*, pp. 77, 78.

[22]Howard Selsam, *Socialism and Ethics* (New York: International Publishers, 1943), pp. 85, 93. Cf. Vernon Venable, *Human Nature: The Marxian View, op. cit.*, p. 208.

[23]Eugene Kamenka, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

The creation of opposing classes further demands the establishment of a rationalization for the egoistic interests of each class such that man's conception of himself is not in harmony with all mankind but is rather shaped by a specific class culture. This theoretical aspect is merely a manifestation of the evils evident in actual human practice. The establishment of social division as a basis for societal order impinges on human freedom, for the inevitable consequence is the exploitation of one class by another. This evil Marx denounces with fervor in the *Communist Manifesto:*

> Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society; all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of such appropriation. . . . All objections urged against the Communistic mode of producing and appropriating material products, have, in the same way, been urged against the Communist modes of producing and appropriating intellectual products. Just as, to the bourgeois, the disappearance of class property is the disappearance of production itself, so the disappearance of class culture is to him identical with the disappearance of all culture. That culture, the loss of which he laments, is, for the enormous majority, a mere training to act as a machine. But don't wrangle with us so long as you apply, to our intended abolition of bourgeois property, the standard of your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law, &c. Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into a law for all, a will, whose essential character and direction are determined by the economical conditions and existence of your class.[24]

It is precisely alienated labor that is at once the cause and the manifestation of human exploitation. To conclude this matter, in so far as labor relations enhance the exploitation of man by man and to that end

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[24]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

thwart human freedom, they are denounced as an evil by Marx. Again, in so far as labor relations disintegrate human social relations and prevent harmonious associations among men, this is also evil. Freedom and harmony once more are disclosed as the moral components of a moral situation.

When Marx's concept of alienated labor is viewed in a broader perspective, his condemnation of capitalism is seen to stem from his analysis of the system as an impersonal force which removes the whole system of acknowledged values from the human level to the abstract, commodity level. Value has meaning for Marx only in terms of its relation to human intention and activity. His analysis of commodities discloses the fact that these objects have their value due to being the embodiment of human powers. The thing in itself has no value; only man and his creative, productive efforts have value and are able to impart value to things. Capitalism loses sight of this human dimension in the political economy and consequently a universal blindness pervades society that provides a cloak for unprecedented human exploitation. Thus, "the very impersonality of economic oppression under capitalism which not only permits excessive abuses but seems to put them beyond the reach of moral criticism."[25] People are thereby victimized by impersonal forces, and for that reason no one need feel responsible. Marx's analysis of capitalism penetrates to a most significant moral issue, namely disclosing that capitalism is not an ethically neutral system as

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[25]William Ash, *Marxism and Moral Concepts* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1964), p. 147.

was supposed by its classical theorists. Kamenka comments on this matter:

> His whole *tour de force* in the *Paris Manuscripts* is to proclaim that political economy cannot be an ethically neutral study of so-called 'objective' relations between non-human things or laws and to bring it back into the ethical sphere by reducing it once more to its human content. The fundamental categories of political economy, Marx insists, are not labour, capital, profits, rents, land. The fundamental category is man, man and his human activities. These activities cannot be abstracted from man; they must be seen as integral expressions of his humanity. The categories of which traditional political economists speak are nothing but abstractions (in the Hegelian sense) from the true essence of society—man. The economists objectify, reify, set up in limited and abstracted shape, as dead objects, what are vital human activities, activities that can only be grasped and correctly developed as part of the whole social man.[26]

In capitalism the commodity, and ultimately capital, are supreme, for they come to possess an autonomy and a value not their own. Their value is an abstraction, the real value resides in the human and in his efforts. This means that all other things only possess a value in so far as they are derivative from the human. For Marx, the self-infinitizing movement of capital is dehumanizing because instead of liberating man it deters him from realizing his human nature in free productive activity.[27] In short, it obstructs his realization of moral goodness in his productive activities.

The Possibility of Moral Goodness

The emphasis up to this point has been on the evils of alienation

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[26]Eugene Kamenka, *op. cit.*, pp. 71, 72.

[27]Robert C. Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

as determined by the criteria of freedom and harmony, but the positive feature of moral value is clearly implicit in the above comments. Moral goodness is likewise judged by the same criteria. That society which enhances man's achievement of moral goodness is of course the communist society of the future. It is a society of free men where there is an actual resolution of the disharmonious and slavish ingredients so characteristic of capitalism. The following comments on the future society suggest that here moral uprightness will be fostered because it is that social order where man's hidden potentials flower:

> *Communism* as the *positive* transcendence of *private property, as human self-estrangement,* and therefore as the real *appropriation* of the *human* essence by and for man; communism therefore as the complete return of man to himself as a *social* (i.e., human) being—a return become conscious, and accomplished within the entire wealth of previous development. This communism, as fully-developed humanism equals naturalism; it is the *genuine* resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man—the true resolution of the strife between existence and essence, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species. Communism is the riddle of history solved, and it knows itself to be this solution.[28]
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> . . . . . .
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> Let us now picture to ourselves, by way of change, a community of free individuals, carrying on their work with the means of production in common, in which the labour-power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour-power of the community.[29]

The unity of man's being becomes a reality in this free community due to the liberation of labor. Man at that time produces in accordance with his

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[28]Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, op. cit.,* p. 102.

[29]Karl Marx, *Capital,* Vol. I, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), p. 90.

generic determinations which are marked by plasticity, freedom and creativity. By producing in freedom and harmony with others the maximum in moral goodness is possible. It is precisely labor then that binds men together socially and morally, for "according to Marx, the activity which holds society together is labor. In labor and the results of it man demonstrates what he is and what he can be."[30] Marx expresses in the following words the role that labor performs in self-realization:

> Labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and Nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material reactions between himself and Nature. He opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate Nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants. By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature. He develops his slumbering powers and compels them to act in obedience to his sway.[31]

Under the conditions of communism labor becomes a fecund and unifying force for humanity and accordingly creates a state of social harmony among men where egotism is suppressed in the interests of the species. To hold that this is man's future prospect means for Marx that moral goodness is indeed attainable through liberated labor. Liberated labor then is set as an absolute moral good by Marx, for such activity alone provides the necessary and sufficient foundation for the realization of all moral goods.

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[30]Abram L. Harris, "Utopian Elements in Marx's Thoughts," *Ethics*, LX (January, 1950), 89, 90.

[31]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, pp. 197, 198.

The above discussion regarding the possibility of attaining moral goodness under communism suggests that Marx's ethical perspective carries with it a sense of responsibility. This means that his condemnation of capitalism was not the ravings of a madman or a disillusioned social misfit but were rather the sincere convictions of one who proposes above all else a way out of the dilemma of current existence. Marx expresses this intention with vigor in this tenth thesis on Feuerbach:

> The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it.[32]

The goal of morality, as has been shown, is the free individual who lives in consentience with his species. Its goal is a community from which all exploitation of man by man is completely removed. A plan of action is advanced by Marx which brings this ideal within the range of the possible. William Ash describes the Marxian plan of responsible action:

> Marxism is thus a *program of action* for laying the economic foundation for a society in which individuals are freest to develop their full potential in amiable association with others—a society in which people's relationships, based on complete equality, naturally expresses themselves in the most moral terms.[33]

Marx, then, believes that he has shown that victory is possible and desirable.[34] He thereby has placed in the hands of people an ethical

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[32]Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach* in *Karl Marx & F. Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Lewis S. Feuer, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959), p. 245.

[33]William Ash, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

[34]Sidney Hook, "Marxism and Values," *Marxist Quarterly*, I (January-March, 1937), 38.

goal which carries with it an insistent sense of responsibility. The fulfillment of this responsibility depends not upon the proper interpretation of the good but rather upon creating the good concretely.[35]

Freedom and Determinism

Additional consideration must be given to Marx's concept of freedom in the light of the fact that many today persist in the notion that he is mainly an economic determinist which carries with it the idea that morals are also externally determined by impersonal forces. An examination of Marx's concept of labor does not lend support to this contention but rather to the opposite view that man is an active, self-determining entity who, though capable of producing both good and evil, can nevertheless rid himself ultimately of his evils.

Marx's idea of freedom does not go to the extreme of denying the existence of any human determinations, but in so far as there are determinations these are not external to man but are generic determinations. This study has already investigated in some depth Marx's insistence upon the fact that man is a natural being. Man's naturality means in one sense that he is a species being which lives out of the determinations of his type. The individual is thus orientated in certain directions objectively determined by his generic organization. It has been shown that the determinations of the human species are marked by plasticity

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[35]Vernon Venable, *op. cit.*, pp. 180, 207.

and creativity which affords the individual a creative role to play in the scheme of things, for its activity as a human possesses a positive character that refuses to be explained away in terms of the eternal agency of other entities. Freedom then is associated with a self-determination, but this "self" can never be utterly divorced from its intrinsic identity with its species. Kamenka expresses Marx's notion of freedom as a self-determination:

> To be free is to be determined by one's own nature. To be unfree is to be determined from without. Marx links this, as we have seen, with harmony and discord, co-operation and conflict. The self-determined activity governed or determined by the rules of its own being, is necessarily harmonious; dependence is the result of conflict and leads to further conflict.[36]

The issue for Marx is that men make their history and not *vice versa*. He states clearly his position in *The German Ideology:*

> In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven. That is to say, we do not set out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh. We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of the material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life. In the first method of approach the starting-point is consciousness taken

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[36]Eugene Kamenka, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

> as the living individual; in the second it is the real living individuals themselves, as they are in actual life, and consciousness is considered solely as *their* consciousness.[37]

It is man alone who alters his social and economic life. It is man alone who produces the particular manifestations of his consciousness, and it can thus be said that it is man alone who creates moral values. His freedom is limited only by the internal determinations of his species and by his own activity in creating his kind of world.

The kind of determinism ascribed to Marx above clearly lends no support to the claim of those who call him an economic determinist. This contention can also be given plausibility by an examination of the phrase "economic determinism" in the light of Marx's perspective in this study. Fulton defines "determinism" in the manner ordinarily held by philosophers: "Philosophically 'determinism' denies the existence of freedom, regarding man as completely controlled by causative factors outside his own will."[38] Marx indeed denies complete freedom to the individual in the sense of making him an autonomous isolate, for the fundamental elections of human beings represent decisions of their generic nature. Human generic nature however does allow for individual creativity but within the limitations of his species. The crucial point in Marx's concept of determination is that man's determinations are not fundamentally external to himself. The term "economic" has a peculiar connotation in Marxian usage where it refers

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[37]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 14, 15.

[38]Robert B. Fulton, *Original Marxism—Estranged Offspring* (Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1960), p. 86.

not to impersonal, external relations or things but rather to human relations. Thomas Sowell elucidates this point.

> The "economic" element in the Marxian theory is somewhat peculiarly defined. What Marx called "the economic structure" of society does not refer to the interrelations among *things*, such as manufacturing, mining, transportation, etc., but to the interrelations among men--the hypothetical table of organization of society at large. It is the nature of these human relationships in production which forms "the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness." (*Capital* III, p. 952) The human relations are reorganized with technological change, creating new problems and the possibility of new solutions.[39]

The major thrust of Marx's thought is that man must put himself back into society as the active agent, for it was the peculiar evil of capitalism that things gained a preeminence over the human such that man himself was reduced to a mere commodity. Marx's concept of communism brings forward again this emphasis:

> Only here has what is to him his *natural* existence become his *human* existence, and nature become man for him. Thus *society* is the consummated oneness in substance of man and nature—the true resurrection of nature—the naturalism of man and the humanism of nature both brought to fulfilment.[40]

Marx's concept of determinism is thus "not a mechanical determinism which prescribes the lines of human advances as ineluctably and automatically as metal rails fix the route of a train. The determining egency in Marxism is a specifically *human* reality. Economic conditions are a system of human relationships."[41] The human being that emerges in Marx's

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[39]Thomas Sowell, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[40]Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, op. cit.*, p. 104.

[41]William Ash, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

theory is one who is no longer history's pawn, no longer condemned by the blind mechanics of social and economic forces to the mere suffering of history, but one who is the maker of history by his own choice and action. The realization of himself is the ultimate moral goal of man and this goal man achieves basically through his own labor, that is, through realizing a fruitful relationship within the labor process.

CHAPTER VII

LABOR AND KNOWLEDGE

The distinctive character of the metaphysical and ethical roots of Marx's concept of labor likewise marks the epistemological foundations of his viewpoint. This can be observed in the first instance by considering what there was in the epistemological theories of his day that he rejected. His own position next shows that he advanced new and fertile ideas respecting what he thought a theory of knowledge ought to be. In disclosing his epistemology the lack of system and clarity of style suitable to an acceptable philosophical treatise present again peculiar difficulties in reproducing in any definitve manner his precise meanings. A general sketch of his theory of knowledge is available in his writings, but the lack of detail prevents conclusive statements. H. B. Acton's remarks regarding Marx's theory of perception, for example, point up one of the difficulties interpreters confront due to his lack of detailed elaboration on vital issues: "Marx, however, did not elaborate his suggestions, and Marxists have been faced with the necessity of making the most of the "copy" theory that they have inherited from Engels and Lenin."[1]

The Principle of Praxis

Marx explicitly rejected both the materialist and the idealist

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[1]H. B. Acton, *The Illusion of the Epoch* (London: Cohen & West, Ltd., 1955), p. 48. Acton errs here, for as this study shows Marx had

epistemology on the grounds of his own activist theory of knowledge. He gives notice of this rejection and of his own theory in his *Theses on Feuerbach* which are considered to be "the most concise formulation of his philosophy that we possess, though how far they are to be taken as representing the thought of his later years is another question."[2] In the first thesis he lays down his initial criticism of these theories. The basic idea of this double critique, through all eleven of the *Theses*, is the notion of action, which Marx understands in the sense of practical activity, namely labor. The chief defects of idealism and materialism stem from their ignoring the revolutionary role of action in their perspectives. Marx asserts in his first thesis:

> The chief defect of all materialism up to now (including Feuerbach's) is, that the object, reality, what we apprehend through our senses, is understood only in the form of the object or contemplation; but not as *sensuous human activity*, as *practice*; not subjectively. Hence in opposition to materialism the *active* side was developed abstractly by idealism—which of course does not know real sensuous activity as such. Feuerbach wants sensuous objects, really distinguished from the objects of thought: but he does not understand human activity itself as *objective* activity. Hence in *The Essence of Christianity*, he sees only the theoretical attitude as the true human attitude, while practice is understood and established only in its "dirty Jew" appearance. He therefore does not comprehend the significance of "revolutionary," of "practical-critical" activity.[3]

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an epistemology even though it may not have been fully delineated. It is also not true that Marx has or only suggests a 'copy' theory of knowledge.

[2]R. N. Carew Hunt, *Marxism Past and Present* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1954), p. 31.

[3]Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach* in *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), p. 197. The term "practice" in this first thesis and in the subsequent theses quoted in this chapter denote

Materialism had an incorrect conception of the relation between the knowing subject and the known object. C. E. M. Joad's comments on Marx's first thesis succinctly state the case:

> What this quotation affirms is that we cannot apprehend an external object merely as object. We apprehend it, presumably, in order that we may act in regard to it. The Materialism which Marx is criticising here is the Materialism of the eighteenth century. This conceived of matter as being at once the cause and the object of sensation. Its significance and, from Marx's point of view, its error reside in its attitude to the mind which it regarded as completely passive in sensation. The mind, for the eighteenth and early nineteenth century materialists, was like a piece of wax receiving in the form of sensations the impressions made upon it by the external world. It was against this kind of materialism that Marx in the quotation given above was protesting. There is no such thing, he insists, as a knowing which is a *mere* contemplation of the outside world.[4]

Materialism was careful to distinguish the sense-object from thought, but it incorrectly considered the external world only as an object of perception and not as an object of action. It accordingly takes a contemplative and merely passive attitude toward reality and thus failing to realize that the development of the world is the product of human activity, which makes man at one with the environment he transforms. Idealism has the opposite weakness in that it reduces concrete reality to the idea. In doing this it stresses the paramount role of human activity, which it takes as the essential reality. But in doing away

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Marx's concept of "praxis" which he adopted from Feuerbach but with distinctive alterations. For a detailed and an illuminating investigation of the significance of Marx's criticism of the Feuerbachian notion of praxis see Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1962), pp. 272-307.

[4]C. E. M. Joad, *Guide to Philosophy* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1936), pp. 474, 475.

with concrete reality as such, by reducing it to mind, it limits man's activity to spiritual activity, making human life an illusion.[5] The ground for Marx's attack then is practical human activity, labor, which gives the human mind an active role in a kind of knowing that effects changes in the human environment.

Marx's critique of the faulty theories continues in his second thesis on Feuerbach. It has been noted that Marx gives insistence to the fact of man's naturality, and this he does again in his theory of knowledge. In this second thesis the principle of man's naturality comes to the fore in his concept of the unity of thought and concrete reality, of man and nature, which forms the basis of this second critique:

> The question whether objective truth is an attribute of human thought—is not a theoretical but a *practical* question. Man must prove the truth, i.e. the reality and power, the "this-sidedness" of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking that is isolated from practice is a purely *scholastic* question.[6]

Marx deals here with the relation between consciousness and the external world, or the relation between the knowing subject and the knowing object and the possibility of obtaining "objective truth." He suggests that one of the fundamental faults of Western thought has been the artificial separation of subject and object.[7] This, according to Marx, leaves the

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[5]Auguste Cornu, *The Origins of Marxian Thought* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publishers, 1957), p. 96.

[6]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), p. 197.

[7]Robert S. Cohen, "On the Marxist Philosophy of Education," in

matter of objective truth a theoretical question which diverts men from a real solution. Marx accordingly does not admit the existence of any purely theoretical activity in human beings which has significance in gaining knowledge. He opposes idealism, for example, which denies the objective reality of the external world and asserts the impossibility of man's attaining concrete reality and objective truth. Marx writes in criticism of idealism:

> *Ideas* can never lead beyond an old world system but only beyond the ideas of the old world system. Ideas cannot *carry anything out* at all. In order to carry out ideas men are needed who dispose of a certain practical force.[8]
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> *Logic* is the *money* of the mind, the speculative *thought-value* of man and of nature, their essence indifferent to any real determinate character and thus unreal; *thought* which is *alienated* and abstract and ignores real nature and man. *The external character of this abstract thought* . . . *nature* as it exists for this abstract thought. Nature is external to it, loss of itself, and is only conceived as something external, as abstract thought, but alienated abstract thought. Finally, spirit, this thought which returns to its own origin and which, as anthropological, phenomenological, psychological, customary, artistic-religious spirit, is not valid for itself until it discovers itself and relates itself to itself as absolute knowledge in the absolute (i.e. abstract) spirit, and so receives its conscious and fitting existence. For its real mode of existence is abstraction.[9]

The question resolves itself to a "practical" one for Marx in that man knows the world only as an object of his experience, and that therefore

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Modern Philosophies and Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 185.

[8]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956), p. 160.

[9]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 200.

the question of the reality of the objective world is not a theoretical question but a practical one as he plainly asserts:

> The resolution of the *theoretical* contradictions is possible *only* through practical means, only through the *practical* energy of man. Their resolution is not by any means, therefore, only a problem of knowledge, but is a *real* problem of life which philosophy was unable to solve precisely because it saw there a purely theoretical problem.[10]

Abstract thought cannot prove the reality and truth of knowledge. That can only be done by practical activity, that is, by showing the effectiveness of knowledge.

Marx believes that he is able to explain man's integration into the world on the basis of action understood as practical activity. He rejects the contemplative attitude toward the world and in so doing ascribes primacy to action. This he asserts in his concluding thesis on Feuerbach:

> The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world differently; the point is, to *change* it.[11]

Marx suggests here that philosophy in being concerned essentially with understanding the world holds that thought is the primordial link between man and nature. The world is thereby reduced to various attitudes that consciousness or thought may take toward the world and in doing so only gives various interpretations of it. Marx emphatically rejects this contemplative, passive point of view and gives prominence to action which

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[10]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

[11]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

alone permits man's effective entry into the external world. Practical activity, and not abstract thought, is the true bond between man and concrete reality. Human activity then must not be limited to gaining knowledge for its own sake, but rather human efforts should essentially aim at linking knowledge to action in order to transform the world.

The *Theses on Feuerbach* disclose the fundamental principle in Marx's epistemology, namely the principle of praxis. Praxis in this context means "*self*-activity, whose object is within its power and control."[12] This is the principle which in Marx unites subject and object, in which the division between thought and reality are transcended. R. N. Carew Hunt claims that it is Marx's principle of praxis which joins subject and object in his epistemology:

> It should be observed, finally, that two elements enter into the above theory—the external world of being (the object), which projects its impressions upon our senses, and mind or consciousness (the subject), which receives these impressions. Each is an activity which is interrelated with the other, so that while consciousness is determined by the external world, that world is what it is by reason of the influence of consciousness upon it. The link between the two is "doing", or "praxis" as Marx calls it, a concept which he also took over from Feuerbach, but again transposed into economic terms by identifying "doing" with the labour of man engaged in production.[13]

The principle of praxis accordingly regards action as essential reality, that is, when it is taken as practical activity which unites subject and object and thus effectively integrates man into the world.[14] This

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[12]Herbert Lamm, "Marx As a Philosopher," *Revue internationale de Philosophie* XII (1958), 246.

[13]R. N. Carew Hunt, *Marxism Past and Present, op. cit.*, p. 34.

[14]Auguste Cornu, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

principle further carries with it a notion of self-knowledge in which the subject and object tend to blend, for "consciousness of the objects which make up his environment must be joined with self-consciousness."[15] The praxis principle also suggests that ideas do not become knowledge until they have been translated into action. Real knowledge of a subject is not a mere copy of fixed objective entities but a mutually transforming integration, through practice, of the knower and the known. Praxis makes both, i.e. knower and the known, a historical event such that the objective world is revealed by practice and both objective reality and the practitioner are modified in the process.[16] Herbert Lamm's concluding remarks respecting Marx's perspective places the principle of praxis in its proper focus: "In conclusion, it is possible to say that Marx is a philosopher with productive activity as his principle; or, what is synonymous with this, a philosopher who "negates" philosophy in order to realize it in the new element of praxis."[17]

Marx's principle of praxis intends the integration of the theoretical and practical aspects of human life, or the union of theory and practice. Marx saw and demanded that others should see human relations as a whole. It is precisely by his principle of praxis that he advances a critique of capitalism and discloses the fact that theory and practice are in fact divorced.

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[15]Robert S. Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

[16]Vernon Venable, *Human Nature: The Marxian View* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), p. 200.

[17]Herbert Lamm, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

It is likewise by this same principle that man shall be able to reunite the theoretical and the practical features of his life under the conditions of liberated labor, namely under communism. Herbert Marcuse comments on this aspect of Marx's viewpoint:

> The labor process, which shows forth as fundamental in the Marxian analysis of capitalism and its genesis, is the ground on which the various branches of theory and practice operate in capitalist society. An understanding of the labor process, therefore, is at the same time an understanding of the source for the separation between theory and practice, and of the element that re-establishes their interconnection. Marxian theory is of its very nature an integral and integrating theory of society. The economic process of capitalism exercises a totalitarian influence over all theory and all practice, and an economic analysis that shatters the capitalist camouflage and breaks through its 'reification' will get down to the subsoil common to all theory and practice in this society.[18]

Marx explicitly declares that contradictions in human existence could not be resolved by correct theory alone but only by the productive energies of man. Marx writes in the *Manuscripts*:

> It is only in a social context that subjectivism and objectivism, spiritualism and materialism, activity and passivity, cease to be antinomies and thus cease to exist as such antinomies. The resolution of the *theoretical* contradictions is possible *only* through practical means, only through the *practical* energy of man. Their resolution is not by any means, therefore, only a problem of knowledge, but is a *real* problem of life which philosophy was unable to solve precisely because it saw there a purely theoretical problem.
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> Social life is essentially *practical*. All mysteries which mislead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.[19]

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[18]Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1954), p. 320.

[19]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 162.

The emphasis on productive activities does not exclude the theoretical, for productive energies here carry with them the idea of a union of theory and practice such that both form complementary and necessary aspects of one process. Theory in itself has no meaning for Marx unless it is in union with practice. 'Correct theory' must aim at changing the world, not merely at interpreting it:

> The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it.[20]

Man's activity in gaining knowledge should not be merely a spiritual activity limited to knowledge for its own sake, but it should essentially aim at linking knowledge to action in order to transform the world. Marx's activist theory of knowledge thus insists that knowledge is indissolubly bound up with action, praxis. This is an insistence that theory and action are one and that their union is realized only by conditions of free labor. His perspective is "a theory of which the truth that is not confirmed by action is sterile, while action which is divorced from theory is purposeless. The two stand in much the same relation to one another as do faith and works in Christian theology."[21]

Under communism the principle of praxis will become an actuality in that man's primary attitude to the world will not be one of passive contemplation, but a sensuous activity seeking to change the world. The result of this attitude is the revolutionary transformation of the world,

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[20] Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959), p. 245.

[21] R. N. Carew Hunt, *The Theory and Practice of Communism* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1963), p. 59.

that is, the achievement of a socialized humanity as Marx indicates in his tenth thesis on Feuerbach.[22] In this sense the attitude of praxis to the world intends the conjunction of knowledge and action. Marx argues that industry already under capitalism manifests this union of knowledge and action. Industry, though alienated, expresses the essence of the truly human society:

> The *natural sciences* have developed a tremendous activity and have assembled an ever-growing mass of data. But philosophy has remained alien to these sciences just as they have remained alien to philosophy. . . . But natural science has penetrated all the more *practically* into human life through industry. It has transformed human life and prepared the emancipation of formed human life and prepared the emancipation of humanity, even though its immediate effect was to accentuate the de-humanization of man. *Industry* is the actual historical relationship of nature, and thus of natural science, to man. If industry is conceived as the *exoteric* manifestation of the essential human *faculties*, the *human* essence of nature and the *natural* essence of man can also be understood. Natural science will then abandon its abstract materialist, or rather idealist, orientation, and will become the basis of a *human* science, just as it has already become--though in an alienated form--the basis of actual human life. One basis for life and another for science is *a priori* a falsehood. Nature, as it develops in human history, in the act of genesis of human society, is the *actual* nature of man; thus nature, as it develops through industry, though in an *alienated* form, is truly *anthropological* nature.[23]

Science penetrates, transforms human life through man's productive efforts and will ultimately be adopted by man in a more complete sense for his own emancipation. The development of man in history thus manifests that man's primary attitude to the world is not theoretical but practical. Already

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[22]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

[23]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, pp. 163, 164.

under capitalism this attitude of praxis displayed itself but only in a limited sphere of life. Once the whole of life bears the mark of this attitude to life there will arise what Marx in the quotation above called "a *human* science." In an alienated society man develops one basis for life and another for science: the theoretical or philosophical basis for life remains estranged from the practical basis of science. Industry demonstrates that its attitude of praxis alters human life, "even though its immediate effect was the dehumanization of man."[24] The adoption of this attitude by man under capitalism suggests what fecundity the principle could have under the conditions of communism. Marx states that the unity of science and life will characterize this liberated society:

> Natural science will one day incorporate the science of man, just as the science of man will incorporate natural science; there will be a single science.[25]

At this time the attitude of praxis will not only characterize productive activities but all of life, with the result that there will be one science that meaningfully orientates our attitude to both nature and man. Praxis is thus that attitude which intends the conjunction of knowledge and action and which culminates in the unity of science and reality.

It now becomes evident that Marx's concept of labor has a vital link with his epistemology in the principle of praxis as delineated in his *Theses on Feuerbach*. Only within the context of Marx's theory of production

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[24]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 163.

[25]*Ibid.*, p. 164.

can his theory of knowledge be accurately and fully comprehended. Production is a process going on in nature, and it is the human part of this interaction which is able to initiate, to regulate and to control the process by virtue of its natural faculties and powers. Man functions in nature according to his generic determinations. The essence of man is his productive life, and this is marked by freedom and intelligence:

> Productive life is, however, species-life. It is life creating life. In the type of life activity resides the whole character of a species, its species-character; and free, conscious activity is the species-character of human beings.[26]

Man's theoretical activity is accordingly marked by initiative and not by dependence and passivity. Theoretically man must create his own object of thought through his labor. If the object of thought is regarded merely as an isolate in the external world separate from human participation, then man remains divorced from nature. The principle which in Marx united subject and object is human production. It thus appears that "the real is not something other than the knower, nor is it a knower regarding the subject matter as a spectator, but is itself 'activity'."[27] In other words, neither thought nor passive contemplation represent man's primary activity but rather production, that is, concrete operations upon nature for the production of material commodities. It is this activity which gives meaning to all

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[26]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.,* p. 127.

[27]Herbert Lamm, *op. cit.,* p. 244.

other human activities, including the human production of ideas. Human labor integrates, plays the role of middle term between thought and reality. This conception is suggested by Marx in *The German Ideology* where he accounts for human consciousness. "Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life."[28] Man's "life" or species character is his ability to produce freely and consciously, so that the activity of man engaged in production is the primary datum. What man is must be established not by his thought life but by his productive life. Marx writes:

> As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production.[29]

Man indeed has a thought life but it is completely bound up with and determined by human labor such that to comprehend human intelligence one must examine human labor. Herbert Lamm expresses succinctly this relation between production and consciousness in Marx:

> The appeal to Marx's thesis that it is not consciousness that determines being but being that determines consciousness, as a basis for concluding—as in Lenin and Stalin—that being is material existence independent of consciousness, ignores the fact that in Marx production is the ontological principle, in relation to which consciousness and "philosophy" gained their significance, but not as independent entities.[30]

In other words, the rational for Marx is what can be made by human self-activity.

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[28]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 15. Marx's view resembles A. N. Whitehead's account of human consciousness. Whitehead holds that consciousness presupposes experience, not experience consciousness. Cf. A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), pp. 244-246.

[29]*Ibid.*, p. 7.

[30]Herbert Lamm, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

Intelligence in Labor

Marx gives considerable significance to intellectual activity in the productive process itself. If man is to sustain a fruitful relationship with nature in his labor, then his labor must be characterized by a maximum employment of intelligence. Marx asserts this in *Capital* I;

> We presuppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realises a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi, and to which he must subordinate his will. And this subordination is no mere momentary act. Besides the exertion of the bodily organs, the process demands that, during the whole operation, the workman's will be steadily in consonance with his purpose. This means close attention. The less he is attracted by the nature of the work, and the mode in which it is carried on, and the less, therefore, he enjoys it as something which gives play to his bodily and mental powers, the more close his attention is forced to be.[31]

Intelligence then ought to be a normal feature of human labor, but in his analysis of capitalism Marx discovers that such is not the case and accordingly condemns the system for depriving the worker of opportunities to exercise his intelligence:

> What constitutes the alienation of labour? First, that the work is *external* to the worker, that it is not part of his nature; and that, consequently, he does not fulfil himself in his work but denies himself, has a feeling of misery rather

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[31]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), p. 198.

> than well-being, does not develop freely his mental and physical energies but is physically exhausted and mentally debased.[32]
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> . . . . . .
>
> This is the relationship of the worker to his own activity as something alien and not belonging to him, activity as suffering (passivity), strength as powerlessness, creation as emasculation, the *personal* physical and mental energy of the worker, his personal life (for what is life but activity?), as an activity which is directed against himself, independent of him and not belonging to him.[33]
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> . . . . . .
>
> The alienation of the worker in his object is expressed as follows in the laws of political economy: . . . the more the work manifests intelligence the more the worker declines in intelligence and becomes a slave of nature.[34]

Intelligent activity resides principally in the management class and for this reason contributes to the deprivation of the worker. Alienated labor is thus marked by a separation of physical and mental labor. The union of the two ought to characterize man's relationship with nature in labor.

One of the distinctions between animal and human production is that the latter is marked by an intelligence capable of perceiving and of applying the general laws of nature and is accordingly able to rise above the rigid determinations characteristic of non-human species. It must be noted that Marx does not distinguish the animal from the human primarily on the grounds of difference in intelligence but mainly on differences in productive activities. Marx contends:

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[32]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 124, 125.

[33]*Ibid.*, p. 126.

[34]*Ibid.*, pp. 123, 124.

> Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to *produce* their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organization. . . . The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production.[35]

Human production has an intellectual and purposive quality not at the animal's command. Human production corresponds to animal production in certain primitive and instinctive forms, but the human is most meaningfully differentiated from the animal by the conscious, purposive, and planned character of his activity. The peculiar intellectual aspect of human labor is that man can understand the laws of nature and produce in accordance with this knowledge. Marx intends to convey this thought in his following comparison:

> Animals construct only in accordance with the standards and needs of the species to which they belong, while man knows how to produce in accordance with the standards of every species and knows how to apply the appropriate standard to the object. Thus man constructs also in accordance with the laws of beauty.[36]

The human intellect enables man to produce in accordance with his knowledge of the laws of nature. That Marx has in mind scientific knowledge is evident in the expression, "standards of every species." Man's knowledge is equally of a practical sort, for he "knows how to apply the appropriate standard to the object." Knowledge of nature and the application of knowledge in labor are thus closely linked, or, what is more understandable

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[35]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 7.

[36]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 128.

in contemporary terms, science and technology are inseparable in the Marxian perspective. This union of science and technology is described as an aesthetic activity which animals never achieve due to the rigid character of their productive activity. M. Cornforth links Marx's concept of human production with the acquisition of scientific knowledge:

> Consequently men are not, like the animals, constrained to follow a predetermined pattern of behaviour. They do not, like the animals, simply adapt themselves to their environment, but also by their own volition adapt their environment to themselves. They *make themselves free* to seek and realise ends which they themslves have conceived and willed. And in so doing they also change themselves, change their own nature.
>
> But the mastery over nature, which distinguishes man from the animals, does not imply the least independence of man from natural law and natural necessity. On the contrary, what it depends on is not the abrogation of natural laws and natural necessity but knowledge and conscious utilisation of them.[37]

Through his capacity to think in general concepts and to act upon them man becomes master of nature.

Man's productive self-activity has the further effect of fashioning history whereas animal production only permits the animal to endure a process over which he has little or no control. It is precisely freedom, consciousness and the purposiveness of the human species in labor which makes him the creator of his own history:

> The animal is one with its life activity. It does not distinguish the activity from itself. It is *its activity*. But man makes his life activity itself an object of his will and consciousness. He has a conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he is completely identified. Conscious life activity distinguishes man from the life activity of animals. Only for this reason is he a species-being. Or

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[37]Maurice Cornforth, *The Theory of Knowledge* (New York: International Publishers, 1955), p. 207.

> rather, he is only a self-conscious being, i.e. his own life is an object for him, because he is a species-being. Only for this reason is his activity free activity.[38]
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> . . . . . .
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> Since, however, for the socialist man, the *whole of what is called world history* is nothing but the creation of man by human labour, and the emergence of nature for man, he, therefore, has the evident and irrefutable proof of his *self-creation*, of his own origins.[39]
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> . . . . . .
>
> And would not such a history be easier to compile since, as Vico says, human history differs from natural history in this, that we have made the former, but not the latter?[40]

Nature provides the *materia prima* of production and human industry, and men by their self-activity make their history, but animals only undergo it. Marx further assigns a unique goal to human destiny, namely the humanization of nature for the humanization of man himself. Presented with such a goal and responsibility, man's ability to comprehend nature's laws and to act on that understanding provides in Marx's view the quality necessary for man to be master of his fate. Knowledge is understood as the distinctively human manner of effecting natural and social change. Man's freedom or mastery is thus linked with intelligent action or the scientifically informed production of both natural and social goods.[41]

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[38]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

[39]*Ibid.*, p. 166.

[40]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 406: see footnote #2.

[41]Vernon Venable, *op. cit.*, pp. 203, 204.

Criterion of Knowledge

Practice is the first and fundamental criterion of knowledge for Marx. He alludes to the matter of criterion for true knowledge in his second thesis on Feuerbach:

> The question whether objective truth is an attribute of human thought—is not a theoretical but a *practical* question. Man must prove the truth, i.e. the reality and power, the "this-sidedness" of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking that is isolated from practice is a purely *scholastic* question.[42]

He tacitly acknowledges here that there exists such a thing as "objective truth," that man can prove the "truth" of his thinking and that there is a meaningful "dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking" provided it is not divorced from human practice. These expressions indicate that Marx has in mind some criterion by which one can determine true knowledge, and this criterion for him is praxis which is understood to be human production.

Practice is the criterion of true knowledge in the sense that there is no knowledge outside objective activity. Knowledge is an activity in which man produces himself as object. Subject and object are thus united by Marx's principle of human production. Marx expresses this thought in his *Manuscripts:*

> But man makes his life activity itself an object of his will and consciousness. . . . His own life is an object for him, because he is a species-being. . . . The object of labour is, therefore, the *objectification of* man's species-life; for he no longer reproduces himself merely intellectually, as in consciousness,

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[42]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 197.

> but actively and in a real sense, and he sees his own reflection in a world which he has constructed. While, therefore, alienated labour takes away the object of production from man, it also takes away his *species-life*, his real objectivity as a species-being, and changes his advantage over animals into a disadvantage in so far as his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him.[43]
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> . . . . . .
>
> It is only when objective reality everywhere becomes for man in society the reality of human faculties, human reality, and thus the reality of his own faculties, that all *objects* become for him the *objectification of himself*. The objects then confirm and realize his individuality, they are *his own* objects, i.e. man himself becomes the object.[44]

In other words, man can know demonstratively and truly only what he can make. What man is essentially making through his production is not mere commodities but himself. Marx's critique of capitalism rests largely on the fact that its productive relations separate man from his objects of production such that they no longer appear as his reality but as foreign, hostile objects. Alienation produces a separation between the knowing subject and the known object by denuding the object of its anthropological nature or by conceiving the product merely as an impersonal commodity. Alienated labor can only produce abstractions and not a true grasp of reality. Marx writes:

> But it is equally clear that a self-consciousness, i.e. its alienation, can only establish "thinghood," i.e. only an abstract thing, a thing created by abstraction and not a real thing.[45]

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[43]Karl Marx, *Early Writings, op. cit.*, pp. 127, 128.

[44]*Ibid.*, pp. 160, 161.

[45]*Ibid.*, p. 206.

Man as a natural being should normally sustain a fruitful relation with nature such that through practical self-activity he creates *his* objects of knowledge. This creation of the objects of knowledge cannot be realized by pure mental activity alone but must always be accomplished by practical activity. Marx asserts:

> An objective being acts objectively, and it would not act objectively if objectivity were not part of its essential being. It creates and establishes *only objects, because* it is established by objects, and because it is fundamentally *natural*. In the act of establishing it does not descend from its "pure activity" to the *creation of objects*; its *objective* product simply confirms its *objective* activity, its activity as an objective, natural being.[46]

The reality of thought is demonstrated only in practice. Ideas are thus not knowledge until translated into action, for, in Marx's words, "man must prove the truth, i.e. the reality and power, the 'this-sidedness' of his thinking in practice."[47]

To claim that practice is the criterion for true knowledge does not mean for Marx that all practice is productive of the right kind of knowledge. In his third thesis on Feuerbach the idea of practice is qualified to carry with it the notion of "self-change":

> The materialistic doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and education forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that the educator himself must be educated. This doctrine has therefore to divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society.
>
> The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can only be comprehended and rationally understood as *revolutionary practice*.[48]

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[46] Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings, op. cit.*, p. 206.

[47] Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 197.

[48] *Ibid.*, pp. 197, 198.

What Marx advocates is a kind of practice which encompasses the coincidence of the transformation of nature and the transformation of the human. This kind of practice he denotes as "*revolutionary practice.*" The labor practices of capitalism only evoke a false consciousness because instead of the coincidence of a transformation of nature and man there is a rupture in man's relation to nature. Under communism man is free to flourish and to produce a truly human consciousness because here man realizes a fruitful bond with nature through his productive life. The general principle then for determining the correctness of human thought is not a matter of a purely logical analysis of existent theories but rather an analysis of productive life, for it is precisely the productive life which is responsible for the particular manifestations of human thought. Marx expresses his contention for this point explicitly in *The German Ideology:*

> As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with *what* they produce and with *how* they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production.[49]
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> . . . . . .
>
> The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life.[50]

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[49]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 7.

[50]*Ibid.*, pp. 14, 15.

In so far as productive relations are in harmony with the species-determinations of the human, to this extent human consciousness reflects, produces true knowledge. The only society where this is possible is the communist society where man has overcome the debilitating effects of alienation which characterized capitalism and where he realizes the fecundity of a liberated productive life which results in a condition of harmony between himself and nature and between himself and his fellow humans.

This discussion suggests that the criteria employed by Marx to assign evil to capitalism and good to communism are the same criteria for determining true knowledge. These criteria, as examined in the previous chapter on moral values, are freedom and harmony. Eugene Kamenka notes that freedom and harmony are Marx's criteria for rationality as well as for moral values:

> It is clear then, that for the young Marx as for Hegel, philosophy is a normative study, and that the notion of the 'rational' provides them with a moral as well as an historical end. It is thus that for both of them the criteria of rationality become at the same time the criteria of what is ultimately moral or good. These criteria, as we saw, are freedom and harmony.[51]

Freedom and harmony however are not concepts which have a meaning apart from human labor in their use as criteria to evaluate knowledge. It is free and harmonious labor which constitutes the ultimate criterion of true knowledge. Communism is the society where man achieves this free and harmonious kind of productive life; it is the society where there is

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[51]Eugene Kamenka, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 23.

a coincidence of transforming nature and of transforming the human. Such liberated, "revolutionary" practice results in "self-change" such that man consciously and freely becomes his own end and creator. The conflicts between human consciousness and human reality characteristic of life under capitalism become resolved through emancipated human labor alone:

> The resolution of the *theoretical* contradictions is possible *only* through practical means, only through the *practical* energy of man. Their resolution is not by any means, therefore, only a problem of knowledge, but is a *real* problem of life which philosophy was unable to solve precisely because it saw there a purely theoretical problem.[52]
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> . . . . . .
>
> Communism as a fully developed naturalism is humanism and as a fully developed humanism is naturalism. It is the *definitive* resolution of the antagonism between man and nature, and between man and man. It is the true solution of the conflict between existence and essence, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solution of the riddle of history and knows itself to be this solution.[53]
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> . . . . . .
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> Thus *society* is the accomplished union of man with nature, the veritable resurrection of nature, the realized naturalism of man and the realized humanism of nature.[54]
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> . . . . . .
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> It will be seen from this how, in place of the *wealth* and *poverty* of political economy, we have the *wealthy* man and the plentitude of human need.[55]

If capitalism debases the human intellect, then it is the free society alone which enhances full release to human intelligence. Man becomes a truly wealthy man under communism and this wealth is not equated with the possession of commodities but with the flowering of the human essence which for Marx is a free, conscious and creative life.

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[52] Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 155. [54] *Ibid.*, p. 157. [55] *Ibid.*, p. 164.

CHAPTER VIII

LABOR AND EDUCATION

The term 'education' as used in this chapter connotes those deliberate endeavors of the mature members of society to transmit to the immature the culture of their society. Marx understands and uses the term in this limited sense.[1]

Education Is Determined by the Labor Process

Education plays a secondary role as a factor in shaping the character of human existence. Human labor is the activity which primarily determines the character of all other human endeavors, including education.

> What is true of man's relationship to his work, to the product of his work and to himself, is also true of his relationship to other men, to their labour and to the objects of their labour. . . . Thus in the relationship of alienated labour every man regards other men according to the standards and relationships in which he finds himself placed as a worker.[2]
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> . . . . . .
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> Religion, the family, the state, law, morality, science, art, etc. are only *particular* forms of production and come under its general law.[3]
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> Further, that the multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society, hence that the "history of humanity" must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange.[4]

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[1]Otto Hermenau, *Karl Marx und die Pädogogik* (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1953), pp. 1-35.

[2]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 129.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 156.

[4]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), p. 18.

This labor relationship manifests man's identity with nature. As a natural being, man creates the character of his social relations by the kind of relation he sustains with nature through his labor. The character of this relationship between man and nature determines the character of all other human relations, for "the identity of nature and man appears in such a way that the restricted relation of men to nature determines their restricted relation to one another, and their restricted relation to one another determines men's restricted relation to nature."[5] If the nature of social relations as a whole is determined by the kind of relation man sustains with nature through his labor, then the kind of education a society conducts is likewise circumscribed by the same relations. Marx explicitly asserts in the *Communist Manifesto* that education is socially determined and depends upon society for its distinctive features:

> And your education! Is not that also social, and determined by the social conditions under which you educate, by the intervention, direct or indirect, of society, by means of schools, &c.? The Communists have not invented the intervention of society in education; they do but seek to alter the character of that intervention, and to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class.[6]

Education in the Marxian perspective subserves the interests of society. Society and its educational institutions in turn depend upon productive relations to fashion their distinctive manifestations at any particular

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[5]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, pp. 19, 20.

[6]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1962), p. 50.

time in human history.

Marx criticized those materialists of his day who thought education itself could significantly transform life. Education for Marx cannot alter human relations in any fundamental way; it is only a change in the practical labor relations that can modify life and consequently education, as Marx writes in his third thesis on Feuerbach:

> The materialistic doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and education forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that the educator himself must be educated. This doctrine has therefore to divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society.
>
> The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can only be comprehended and rationally understood as *revolutionary practice*.[7]

In other words, to assume that education could change men is to assume a superior class of professionals who provide the remainder of society with enlightenment. The Platonic ideal of a philosopher-king Marx here rejects because it accentuates the already debilitating effects of a society ruptured by class divisions. Such an arrangement adds to the enslavement of men by erecting a superior class of intellectuals destined to rule over them and at the same time to deprive them of their freedom which alone is a necessary condition for self-realization. That which effects changes in both circumstances and in human personality is "*revolutionary practice*" which Marx understands to be practical productive relations.

In this third thesis on Feuerbach two opposing pedagogical

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[7]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, pp. 197, 198.

perspectives are evident. For Feuerbach and those he represents, pedagogy is essentially teaching or enlightenment. For Marx, pedagogy is in essence self-education or self-transformation.[8]

The Feuerbachian notion of pedagogy is faulty according to Marx due to its mistaken view of man and of the role education and the educator play in altering human life. Feuerbach shares with the French materialists of the eighteenth century the rationalist vision of man: man is reason and it suffices to know in order to have entered on the road to happiness. Enlightened individuals perform the necessary task of freeing mankind from its old prejudices and of shedding over humanity the light of reason. According to this viewpoint, these enlightened teachers are the protagonists of history. They are, as it were, prophets of reason whose teachings intend the emancipation of mankind from the suppression of its long established prejudices.[9] These prophets of reason appeared to themselves "as if they were outside of the social process—as if they were historical mutants whose fertilizing ideas would revolutionize the existing order."[10] Such a presumptuous attitude on their part, Marx contends, leads to a belief in the division of society into two antagonistic parts: one of the common, ordinary man whose ideas are simply determined by circumstances and education, and the other,

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[8]G. M. Cottier, *Du Romantisme au Marxisme* (Paris: Alsatia, 1961), pp. 72, 73.

[9]*Ibid.*

[10]Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1962), p. 287.

"spirits who are elevated above society and social laws, the rare gift of the gods to an errant humanity."[11] Their presumed role as leaders of humanity flows from the view that "the keys to salvation were in the possession of a handful of right-thinking men—call them saints or scientists or philosophers or social engineers, as you please."[12] This division separates society into classes which sustain at best a paternalistic relation to each other in which one is superior, more mature than the other. In consequence, the inferior, immature class remains dependent upon the superior, enlightened class for their happiness. It is in relation to this conception of pedagogy that Marx will delineate his position.

A fundamental point which Marx underlines in this third thesis on Feuerbach is that education must be strictly egalitarian as opposed to the paternalistic view advanced by Feuerbach. The paternalistic view bases its conception on the inequality of classes and of men wherein the educators are opposed to those being educated. In Marx's words: "This doctrine has therefore to divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society."[13] Marx rejects that social arrangement in which a hierarchy of intellectuals is elevated or given authority over others. For him the educational process is essentially a process of self-

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[11]Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx, op. cit.*, p. 287.

[12]*Ibid.*, pp. 287, 288.

[13]Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach* in *The German Ideology, op. cit.*, p. 198.

education, of self-transformation. True education is an education without a teacher in the sense that man is his own teacher.[14] Such a conception does not carry with it the abolition of formal schooling, but it does intend to modify the relation between the teacher and the pupil in any school as well as the relation between men in the larger contexts of society.

The egalitarian aspect of Marx's pedagogical principle which carries with it the notion of self-education can be linked to his concept of man as a species being. The "self" involved in this pedagogical concept is to be understood primarily as the "self" of generic man. In this sense the education of generic man is an endeavor of humanity as a whole and can never be relegated to a privileged or presumably enlightened class within society. Self-education then appears in this light related to Marx's notion of the evolutionary development of the species whereby mankind attains to maturity through associated effort, and that endeavor which Marx posits as fundamental to this end is productive labor. By means of productive labor man accomplishes the humanization of nature for the intent of his own humanization. Labor then is the basic educative force which results in actual transformations of human life. Such is the thought of Marx in this third thesis where he states that "the coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can only be comprehended and rationally understood as

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[14]G. M. Cottier, *op. cit.*, pp. 73, 74.

revolutionary practice."[15] Changes in circumstances and in the human are not achieved by positing a superior class of enlightened philosophers or intellectuals who dispel human stupidity and open enlightened paths for mankind to follow but only by altering the nature of material productive activities. That practice which permits human emancipation is "*revolutionary practice,*"[16] or liberated labor which the proletarian revolution brings about. Man educates himself primarily not by the power of reason but by praxis, and this educational effort is not the responsibility of the few but of all. The Feuerbachian concept of education bears traces of transcendence which for Marx ought to be wiped out, and furthermore the "teacher" appears in Feuerbach as legally responsible for the world of alienation.[17]

To the extent that mankind suffers from the debilitating effects of alienated labor, to this extent education is incapacitated to serve the interests of humanity as a whole. The alienation of man under capitalism makes the school the tool of the dominant class. In his *Critique of the Gotha Programme,* Marx challenges, for example, the possibility of equal educational opportunity within the context of a capitalistic society.

> *Equal elementary education?* what idea lies behind these words? Is it believed that in present-day society (and it is

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[15]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology, op. cit.,* p. 198.

[16]*Ibid.*

[17]G. M. Cottier, *op. cit.,* pp. 73, 74.

> only with this one has to deal) education can be *equal* for all classes? Or is it demanded that the upper classes also shall be compulsorily reduced to the modicum of education—the elementary school—that alone is compatible with the economic conditions not only of the wage workers but of the peasants as well.[18]

In the *Communist Manifesto* he advances the basic reason for the inequality of educational opportunity which is that the school becomes dominated by the ideas of the dominant class who have control of production.

> Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into a law for all, a will, whose essential character and direction are determined by the economical conditions of existence of your class.[19]

Furthermore, the character of these ruling ideas alter as the mode of production changes:

> What else does the history of ideas prove, than that intellectual production changes its character in proportion as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.[20]

Since the character of education is fashioned according to the demands of society, these demands will be those of the class which controls and determines productive life. Schools under capitalism reflect the alienated condition of life in general. The source of this alienation

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[18]Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (New York: International Publishers, 1938), p. 20.

[19]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

[20]*Ibid.*, p. 52.

Marx situates in the labor process.[21] When there is a change in this labor process, there will be a corresponding modification in the educational institutions which reflect the dominant ideas of that society.

Schools in a capitalistic society operate under the tensions created by class division which result from the division of labor. Under the democratic laws of a capitalist society the schools augment the tensions already produced by alienated labor.

> Altogether collisions between the classes of the old society further, in many ways, the course of development of the proletariat. The bourgeoise finds itself involved in a constant battle. . . . The bourgeoise itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoise.[22]

Education of the worker strengthens him in his opposition to the capitalist. The education of the worker does not minimize class tensions, but rather it brings the worker into a fuller awareness of his slavery and provides him with the intellectual equipment to fight for the cause of the proletariat which Marx understands as the cause of humanity.[23]

A Sound Basis for Education

In order to realize a sound basis for education, Marx contended

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[21]See Chapter IV, "Labor—The Dilemma of Current Existence," for a detailed account.

[22]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[23]*Ibid.*, p. 54

that it is necessary "to have a sound social relation to the labor process."[24] All of life including education under capitalism is, due to alienated labor, fractured and self-defeating. The overcoming of the source of alienation will provide a basis for enrichment of human life.

> This material, directly *perceptible* private property is the material and sensuous expression of *alienated human* life. Its movement—production and consumption—is the *sensuous* manifestation of the movement of all previous productions, i.e. the realization or reality of man. Religion, the family, the state, law, morality, science, art, etc. are only *particular* forms of production and come under its general law. The positive supersession of *private property* as the appropriation of *human* life, is, therefore, the positive supersession of all alienation, and the return of man from religion, the family, the state, etc. to his *human*, i.e. social life.[25]

The society where education and all social endeavors contribute to human development is the communist society of the future. Here man will enjoy a fruitful relation between himself and nature due to liberated labor practices. Education at this time will be liberated from the prejudices of a class-divided society. Only in a free society can education become a constructive force aimed at the maximum development of the human. It is in such a society of liberated men that "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."[26]

A sound educational principle which the communist society of the future makes possible and ensures is a genuine commitment to

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[24]Robert S. Cohen, "On the Marxist Philosophy of Education," in *Modern Philosophies and Education*, ed. Nelson B. Henry (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 198.

[25]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

[26]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

intellectual freedom. In the first instance the cultural wealth of the past and present will become the possession of every individual rather than that of the privileged. Marx says of the communist society:

> In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.[27]

One of the conditions of intellectual freedom is the complete divorce of education from both the state and the church. Marx elaborated on this idea when he spoke approvingly in 1871 of the educational reforms introduced by the Communards of the Paris Commune whose brief triumph lasted only seventy-two days.

> The whole of the educational institutions were opened to the people gratuitously, and at the same time cleared of all interference of Church and State. Thus, not only was education made accessible to all, but science itself freed from the fetters which class prejudice and governmental force had imposed upon it.[28]

The freedom of learning depended upon its release from class prejudice which was embodied for the ruling class in the church and state. Marx objects to state control of education equally as much as to ecclesiastical control:

> "*Elementary education through the state*" is altogether objectionable. Defining by a general law the financial means of the elementary schools, the qualifications of the teachers, the branches of instruction, etc., and, as happens

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[27]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

[28]*Ibid.*, pp. 519, 520.

> in the United States, supervising the fulfilment of these legal prescriptions by means of state inspectors, is a very different thing from appointing the state as the educator of the people! Government and church should rather be equally excluded from any influence on the school. Particularly, indeed, in the Prusso-German empire (and one cannot take refuge in the rotten subterfuge that one is speaking of a "state of the future," we have seen what that is) the state has need, on the contrary, of a very stern education by the people.
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> But the whole programme, for all its democratic clang, is tainted through and through by the servile belief in the state . . .[29]

Freedom in education also meant for Marx that the control of education should be as close to the rule of each individual as possible. He praised the Paris Commune for its policy of local control in which social institutions could function meaningfully as an agency of the people.[30] The removal of these restraints is the negative condition for realizing freedom in education. Positively, intellectual freedom is dependent upon a society of liberated men where the goal of self-realization for all is realized in actual life due to the liberation of labor, that is, the existence of a communist society as Marx understands it.

Labor Combined With Education

The idea of combining productive labor and its principles with education was first advocated by Marx in 1866 in his "Instructions for

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[29]Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme, op. cit.*, pp. 20, 21.

[30]Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 520.

the Delegates of the Provisional General Council."[31] These instructions were drawn up by Marx for the delegates to the First Congress of the International Working Men's Association held at Geneva in September, 1866, and they were eventually read at the Geneva Congress as the official report of the General Council.[32] In section four, "Juveniles and Children's Labour (Both Sexes),"[33] Marx deals with the all important question respecting "the formation of the rising working generation."[34] The general principle of the educational aspects of this section asserts the value of combining labor with education:

> Proceeding from this standpoint, we say that no parent and no employer ought to be allowed to use juvenile labour, except when combined with education.[35]

Marx thereupon proceeds to clarify in more specific terms what he means by education:

> By education we understand three things.
> Firstly: *Mental education.*
> Secondly: *Bodily education,* such as is given in schools of gymnastics, and by military exercise.
> Thirdly: *Technological training,* which imparts the general principles of all processes of production, and, simultaneously initiates the child and young person in the practical use and handling of the elementary instruments of all trades.[36]

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[31]Karl Marx, "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional General Council," *The General Council of the First International: 1864-1866* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, no date), pp. 340-351.

[32]*Ibid.*, p. 439, note #321.

[33]*Ibid.*, pp. 343-346.

[34]*Ibid.*, p. 345.

[35]*Ibid.*

[36]*Ibid.*

Here education is viewed in a very broad manner. Marx attaches no qualifications to the intellectual aspect of the training, presumably because what this entailed was reasonably clear to all. His major concern is to elucidate his concept of technological instruction. This definition of technical training can be construed as Marx's definition of 'polytechnic education,' for such training "imparts the general principles of all processes of production," and at the same time trains them in the skills of using the basic tools of all trades. The breadth of training indicated in this definition suggests that specific vocational training for the immature was not condoned. He specifically refers to children between the ages of nine and seventeen.[37] A motive for advancing this concept of combining labor and education is also attached to the program:

> The combination of paid productive labour, mental education, bodily exercise and polytechnic training, will raise the working class far above the level of the higher and middle classes.[38]

The elevation of the social status of the laboring class within a class divided society is the motive appended to these educational recommendations for the consideration of the First International.

Greater significance is attached to the concept of combining education with labor in the first volume of his work, *Capital*, published in 1867. Marx sets forth these educational insights in the context of

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[37]Karl Marx, "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional General Council," *The General Council of the First International: 1864-1866, op. cit.*, p. 344.

[38]*Ibid.*, p. 346.

evaluating the educational clauses of the Factory Acts which were currently a matter of law in England. Although the educational clauses were meager in Marx's opinion in their intent to provide education for the youth of working men, they nevertheless suggested to Marx the important educational principle—the combining of labor and education.

> Paltry as the education clauses of the Act appear on the whole, yet they proclaim elementary education to be an indispensable condition to the employment of children. The success of those clauses proved for the first time the possibility of combining education and gymnastics with manual labour and, consequently, of combining manual labour with education and gymnastics. The factory inspectors soon found out by questioning the schoolmasters, that the factory children, although receiving only one half the education of the regular day scholars, yet learnt quite as much and often more.[39]

This experiment in English education appears to have crystalized in Marx's thinking the plausibility of including labor as a *necessary* component in the educative process:

> From the Factory system budded, as Robert Owen has shown us in detail, the germ of the education of the future, an education that will, in the case of every child over a given age, combine productive labour with instruction and gymnastics, not only as one of the methods of adding to the efficiency of production, but as the only method of producing fully developed human beings.[40]

Here in this educational endeavor is contained "the germ of the education of the future." This future education is universal in that all school age children are included. This education is distinctive and effective due to its integration with productive labor. The ultimate goal is not only to

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[39]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol, I, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), pp. 528, 529.

[40]*Ibid.*, pp. 529, 530.

increase the efficiency of industrial production but more importantly to produce "fully developed human beings." In making the claim that the integration of labor with education is "the only method" of achieving this humanizing task, Marx adds increased importance to the concept. Education must necessarily incorporate this principle of labor into the instructional process if beneficial results are to accrue to mankind. The central purpose of this educational theory is to achieve the union of mental with practical work which for Marx means the general all-round development of the individual.[41]

Polytechnic education is the recognition of a fundamental law of production which demands variation of work activities for the laborer. Industry, claims Marx, has come to recognize the necessity of this basic law of production as a result of its catastrophic experiences in adjusting to a new mode of human production.

> But if, on the one hand, variation of work at present imposes itself after the manner of an overpowering natural law, and with the blindly destructive action of a natural law that meets resistance, at all points, Modern Industry, on the other hand, through its catastrophes imposes the necessity of recognising as a fundamental law of production, variation of work, consequently the greatest possible development of his varied aptitudes. It becomes a question of life and death for society to adapt the mode of production to the normal functioning of this law. Modern Industry, indeed, compels society, under penalty of death, to replace the detail worker of to-day, crippled by life-long repetition of one and the same trivial operation, and thus reduced to the mere fragment of a man, by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labours, ready to face any change of production, and to whom the different social functions he

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[41]Albert P. Pinkevitch, *The New Education in the Soviet Republic*, trans. N. Perlmuter (New York: The John Day Company, 1929), p. 196.

> performs, are but so many modes of giving free scope to his own natural and acquired powers.[42]

The very life and death of society depend upon the nature of its reaction to this basic law. Polytechnic education is the only alternative open to men in an industrialized society if they wish to exist. Survival is dependent upon the "fully developed individual," and this means that one is "fit for a variety of labours, ready to face any change of production." It means further that such training enables man to realize the freedom which is an essential part of his being, for his every performance in the community must be a free expression of "his own natural and acquired powers."

Modern industry had already in Marx's day spontaneously responded to this fundamental law of production by establishing technical and agricultural schools.

> One step already spontaneously taken towards effecting this revolution is the establishment of technical and agricultural schools, and of "écoles d'enseignement professionnel," in which the children of the working-men receive some little instruction in technology and in the practical handling of the various implements of labour.[43]

This step had been taken apart from the compulsion of statutory law and in response to this law of production. This law of production will be the ultimate compulsion for men to reorientate both industry and education. The development of mankind will eventually demand a significant role for polytechnic training in the schools:

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[42]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, pp. 533, 534.

[43]*Ibid.*, p. 534.

> Though the Factory Act, that first and meagre concession wrung from capital, is limited to combining elementary education with work in the factory, there can be no doubt that when the working class comes into power, as inevitably it must, technical instruction, both theoretical and practical, will take its proper place in the working-class schools.[44]

Polytechnic education of necessity must be incorporated into the schools according to Marx because human survival and the progress of man depend upon it.[45]

The value of knowing and experiencing in some fashion all the principles and skills of industrial production is further evident in its contribution to the advance of inventions and science. Marx cites the great inventions and the creative work of the mathematicians in the seventeenth century to support this claim:

> The handicraft period bequeathed to us the great inventions of the compass, of gunpowder, of type-printing, and of the automatic clock. But, on the whole, machinery played that subordinate part which Adam Smith assigns to it in comparison with division of labour. The sporadic use of machinery in the 17th century was of the greatest importance, because it supplied the great mathematicians of that time with a practical basis and stimulant to the creation of the science of mechanics.[46]

The absence of machinery as a dominant means of production meant that producers had a broad knowledge of production and that they acquired a variety of practical skills. The result was the establishment of a basis for great inventions and advances in science. The science of

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[44]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 534.

[45]*Ibid.*, pp. 534, 535.

[46]*Ibid.*, pp. 382, 383.

mechanics was created because theoreticians had a practical basis from which to formulate this new science. Being enmeshed in the practical, the mathematician could comprehend the practical benefits of such a science and was accordingly motivated to develop science. Marx here suggests that variation in the work experiences of the masses and a corresponding polytechnic education to prepare them for such variation of labors furnish the necessary basis for the future development of science and technology. The trend in Marx's day had been toward specialization—a narrowness in the laborer's acquired skills such that an individual became limited to the operation of a single machine from his youth. Such a tendency Marx denounces because it enfeebles the human by producing an intellectual desolation which creates a state of mind worse than that acquired from "natural ignorance."[47] This narrowness of human activity and training destroys in Marx's opinion the mind's capacity for normal development and converts "immature human beings into mere machines."[48]

Polytechnic Education Grounded Upon the Praxis

Polytechnic education evidently has its roots in Marx's concept of praxis even though he never explicitly linked the two. Polytechnic education which attempts an integration of the theoretical and the practical in formal training is in general an application of the principle

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[47]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

[48]*Ibid.*

of praxis, of Marx's general perspective regarding the nature of man and his relation to the external world. Man is a natural being whose unique function in nature is to produce freely, consciously and creatively in the face of nature. The primordial link between man and objective reality is his labor or praxis. Man's basic attitude toward life is accordingly practical. By giving the practical a role of first importance in education, Marx devises a conception of education founded on his principle of praxis.

The general aim of polytechnic education indicates in particular its connection with the principle of praxis. A fundamental tenet of Marx's concept of polytechnic education is his insistence upon a well-rounded education for the individual, for the goal he enjoins upon education is "fully developed human beings."[49] Polytechnic education is accordingly synonymous for Marx to a liberal, general education.[50] The orientation of education about the polytechnic principle, Marx believes, is imperative if the individual is to be prepared to assume his role as a free man in society. Human freedom is basically secured through the material productive activities, and praxis is defined by Marx as self-activity. Polytechnic education aims to develop the individual in a manner which agrees with his species being. Since man's fundamental attitude toward the world is practical and not theoretical, polytechnic education recognizes this basic fact about man and to this

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[49]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 530.

[50]Both adjectives, "general" and "liberal," seem necessary in order to give an adequate concept of education as Marx viewed it in its more

end gives prominence to the practical in education in order to promote human excellence. To train the immature primarily in contemplative ways of thinking is self-defeating and results in alienating man from his environment. The integration of the human into the world is only possible through praxis, that true bond between man and reality. An education founded on the principle of praxis ought to prepare the young to effectively grasp the external world by their own powers.

The connection between polytechnic education and the principle of praxis is further demonstrated by the recommendations Marx makes for the content of education. He recommends at one point the combination of "productive labour with instruction and gymnastics."[51] He states at another place that education includes "mental," "bodily," and "technological training."[52] His expressed intent is that these elements should be combined into an integral education for the individual.[53] No suggestions are made as to how these several components are to be integrated in practice into a coherent curriculum of studies, but they stand for Marx as necessary parts of the whole. Technological training, the distinctive and determinative facet of the whole, "imparts the

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fundamental sense. John Macdonald's definition of these terms seems appropriate to Marx's intent: "General education is a form of education that has relevance for every human being. The term "liberal" implies essentially that education liberates or frees the individual from the limitations of his merely animal nature and directs him towards the way in which he can realize his true humanity." Cf. John Macdonald, *A Philosophy of Education* (Toronto: W. J. Gage Limited, 1965), p. 92.

[51] *Ibid.*, p. 529.

[52] Karl Marx, "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional General Council," *op. cit.*, p. 345.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 346.

general principles of all processes of production."[54] This recommendation doubtless stems from Marx's belief that man is unique among the animals due to his ability to perceive and apply the general laws of nature.[55] Technological training would then involve a study of science and of how science applies to the production of objects which satisfy human needs. At the same time that these principles of science and technology are being taught Marx recommends training in the practical skills of handling the elementary tools of all trades.[56] These recommendations give prominence to the practical in the content of education, but it must be noted that they also emphasize a breadth of training. Training which harmonizes with the principle of praxis must have a practical content and one that prepares the individual to participate in a wide variety of productive activities in order to ensure his freedom of movement within the world of work.

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[54]Karl Marx, "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional General Council," *op. cit.*, p. 345.

[55]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

[56]Karl Marx, "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional General Council," *op. cit.*, p. 345.

CHAPTER IX

EVALUATION I: GENERAL CRITIQUE

Humanism

Marx's concept of labor discloses the basic components of his humanism. It is an illumination of Marx's quest to discover those conditions under which man could achieve his freedom. In his philosophy man is viewed as a natural being in constant interaction with his material environment. In this activity with nature man finds himself—by his choices and actions he defines his character. Human activity is given specificity in a distinctively new emphasis on labor. The principle of praxis accordingly governs man's attainment of freedom. To the extent that human labor is alienated to this degree man is enslaved. To the extent that human labor is liberated from the debilitating effects of alienation, to this extent man lives freely in accord with the determinations of his species.

It might appear to some that Marx conceives man only as *homo faber*, or man the smith, the inventor and forger of new gadgets, yet this narrow conception of man he rejected for such was capitalism's view of humanity, that is, at least of the working class. Man is indeed *homo faber* for Marx, but in ascribing ontological status to man as *homo faber* he saw man as an intelligent, moral, social and political being. In other words, the totality of the human being is summed up in this conception. Marx's arraignment of capitalism stems in large measure from its low estimate of man as *homo faber*. It narrowly conceives man

as a mere worker, a means for the ends of others; he is accordingly reduced to the miserable status of a commodity in the market place; his humanity is thwarted in the interests of economic and national systems; he no longer is self-reliant, free and noble but is alienated to an existence like that of the infrahuman species.

One might question contemporary practices in the light of Marx's outlook. Has capitalism, whether private or state, in the twentieth century in actual fact altered its conception of man as a commodity? The prominence of existentialist philosophy in this century testifies to man's increasing sense of a lost identity which he struggles to regain. Have we in this century seriously considered that the pattern of our labor practices has significantly contributed to this increasing loss of identity or alienation?

Marx's *Weltanshauung* assumes the essential unity of the human race. He views humanity as a community bonded together by productive labor which constitutes the essence of man. Accordingly he would reject the modern idea of a world government or United Nations as means to create harmony among nations and to exemplify their unity in so far as such organizations use coercive powers to obtain and to maintain that unity. Any coercive state which presumes to represent the unity of mankind functions under an illusion according to Marx, for man is a species being already unified according to the generic determinations of his type. Unity is thus not something achieved by the state but must be recognized as already existing. The removal of the enfeebling effects of alienated labor and private property will usher in that society of men who live

according to the unity they already possess and which can never be something gained or superimposed upon men by state planners. The present generation could profitably review its move toward one world government and ask in the light of the Marxian perspective if this development will bring freedom or tyranny.

Marx's humanism argues for the all-round, integrated development of the personality in opposition to the tendency in industry to produce a narrowly specialized individual who participates very little in the variety of human activities available. Today specialization in vocation characterizes labor relations more profoundly than it did in Marx's time. Marx held that one of the effects of specialization in work was the hindering of the individual's intellectual development, but the trend toward specialization today places greater demands upon mental resources.[1] It is increasingly necessary for the common laborer to have secondary and post-secondary vocational training in order to gain employment. Industry demands an ever enlarging number of specialists with doctoral degrees. From all appearances capitalism has actually contributed to mental development, but the aspect of this trend which Marx would note

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[1]The concept of specialization advanced by A. N. Whitehead would appear to be acceptable to Marx. Whitehead links training in specific vocational fields with a general, liberal education. The foundation of education for everyone is general education; specialization is the study in depth of a particular interest a student has acquired in his basic education. Thus Whitehead encourages specialization in order to develop individuality but not at the expense of developing a one-sidedness in the individual and of neglecting a broad training initially. Cf. A. N. Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays* (New York: Mentor Books, 1929), pp. 13-25.

as an indication of a progression in human alienation is the narrowness of the specialist's field of competency. The worker is generally equipped to control only a minimal portion of the productive process and therefore does not realize the full development of his personality. Labor relationships continue to augment human alienation by narrowing the worker's field of competence and by making him more dependent on a massive, centrally controlled industrial complex. In the hurried pace of industrializing human resources the Marxian insights suggest the need for rethinking the accepted patterns of labor relations. Are we more dominated by an obsession for material gain than we are with human welfare? Is capitalism's offer seen for what it is: a scorpion with a crown of gold but with a deadly sting in its tail? Does the gold placate our sense of alienation such that we fail to see the lurking menace to our freedom?

The concept of labor affords evidence that Marx is not an economic determinist in the sense that there are impersonal economic forces which determine the course of history apart from the deliberate choice of man. Man is the creator of both the good and the evil through the relationship he sustains with nature in his labor. It is Marx's belief that man will ultimately rid himself of these self-made evils and create a society where the highest good for man is achieved by all. Under capitalism man appears to be the victim of his circumstances, but the ray of hope for future emancipation proceeds from the belief that alienation is a creation of man and the corresponding belief that man will in time cast off his shackles and create a society of free men. History is

thus made by man; it is not merely something man endures. The alienated society man produces is an aspect of his evolutionary development. From all appearances man suffers due to forces beyond his control, but Marx ascribes no responsibility to impersonal forces of nature or to a supernatural Being for the human dilemma. Alienated society expresses an immature phase in human development. In the communist society man commences with a certain degree of maturity in the evolutionary process from which he can continue his development in freedom and harmony, unhindered by the antagonisms created by alienated labor.

Marx addresses himself to the unique problems of an emerging industrial society, and for this reason his philosophy has significance for today even though industry is now greatly advanced. Marx developed his philosophy in the context of problems created by this new phenomenon in human experience. Industry loomed on the horizon in Marx's time as a harbinger of much good, but for Marx it also portended a threat to mankind. The threat came in the intensified alienation of human labor. Work became more impersonal, less self-satisfying and more oppressive. The worker no longer controlled any major segment of the productive process; he functioned much like a machine. Industrialization under capitalism threatened human freedom, a sense of communal life and personal dignity. Since the time of Marx labor unions and benevolent employers have recognized the problems involved in mass production and have accordingly contributed much to human welfare. No doubt the Marxian vision has guided many in their efforts to resolve the peculiar

problems involved in mass production and have accordingly contributed much to human welfare. No doubt the Marxian vision has guided many in their efforts to resolve the peculiar problems of an industrialized society. Is the Marxian vision sufficiently understood today to assist in gaining insight into these persistent problems? A fresh look at Marx as a humanist may reveal new trends in human alienation and suggest novel approaches for their solution.

Alienation

The prediction by Marx that the devalorization of the worker would continually increase under capitalism has frequently been challenged by citing the progressive increase in the standard of living which most industrialized nations have achieved, but one wonders what critique Marx might make of the alienated state of man today. He would doubtless admit his error in anticipating a reduced standard of living for the worker, but he would likely be quick to show that these material gains have not been accompanied by important gains in freedom and harmony among men which are the basic criteria for assessing human alienation. He no doubt would point to the increasing power of the industrialist, capitalist and politician over the lives of men as evidence that human alienation has not in fact diminished but has been augmented by the alienated nature of labor relations. He might show that men both in the Soviet Union and in the Western nations are motivated to work for the material growth of their country, for an abstraction called the 'national economy.' The growth of these nations

is largely determined and manipulated by industrial and official state planners. Enormous technical training programs are launched by governments in order that their nations may effectively compete in the world market and in the search for world power. The organization and the authority of both industry and the state so effectively control the life of the worker that his alienation is more aggravated than in the previous century. It is alienation that deceives him into believing all is well when in reality he is a slave to the system. This I believe would be Marx's indictment of our present practices and his answer to his critics.

The concept of alienation was taken by Marx from Hegel who viewed alienation as an unavoidable ontological fact. Marx did not take it as ontological in the sense that he regarded it inescapable; he gave it a social context. As ontology, as an ultimate, man could only accept alienation. As a social fact, rooted in a specific system of historical relations, alienation could be overcome by changing the social system. Marx situates alienation in the organization of labor. The capitalistic mode of production has, above all others, accentuated human alienation to the point where the proletariat evolves to emancipate mankind from this plight. By narrowing the concept of alienation, Marx takes some risks. In the first place there is the risk of falsely identifying the source of alienation only in the system of private property. The whole ethical pathos is derived from this single dilemma in society. Once alienated labor is exposed for what it is and eliminated by the proletariat, then men are free from the singular cause of all human ills. As a social fact alienation could be situated in a

variety of social phenomena. Another risk is that of introducing a note of utopianism into the idea that once the mode of organizing labor has been transformed man would immediately be free. Such an idea gives the masses a relatively limited and manageable task to achieve, but the alteration of a single phenomenon in the social structure does not appear to assure the wholesale transformation of a complex way of life. Marx likewise runs the risk of wrongly accounting for the inception of alienation in human society. He accepts the idea of the evolution of man and society through the productive efforts of man. To take alienation only in a social context raises the question as to how man ever developed or acquired this acquisitive propensity. Marx suggests that it is the will to power, for brutal force always had everywhere the upperhand in the primitive accumulation of capital.[2] This suggests that there were forces other than the organization of productive activities that account for alienation, namely the lust for power over other men. It would seem that the elimination of the system of private property from society appears futile since human passion seems more fundamental than societal organization.

Species Being

Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of man as a creative being is not entirely compatible with Marx's perspective even though Sartre asserts in his book, *Searth for a Method*, that he is "in profound agreement

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[2]Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling (New York: The Modern Library, 1906), pp. 784, 785.

with Marxist philosophy."[3] This writing intends to establish the harmony of Marxism and existentialism.[4] To this end Sartre links Marx's concept of man with his own existentialist emphasis upon man's creative freedom. In this respect Sartre establishes his affinity to Marx's thought. Sartre shows that Marx did hold that man is not entirely determined by economic conditions because man can influence history positively either by resisting it or collaborating with it.[5] Using Marx's notion of 'praxis,' Sartre seeks "to restore to the individual man his power to go beyond his situation by means of work and action.[6] Man's creative role further expresses itself for Sartre, in agreement with Marx, that man is the entity through which meaning is introduced into the world—"man is, for himself and for others a signifying being. . . ."[7] It thus appears evident that Sartre does follow Marx in his concept of man as a creative being, but in doing this a radical individualism is developed contrary to Marx's anthropology. Wilfred Desan shows in his book, *The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre,* that the Sartrian man is not the generic man of Marx because "there is no place in the writings of Karl Marx for a Self with such an amplitude."[8] Sartre's concept of "Self" or "*pour-soi*" in particular does not accord with Marx. Desan finds that the "Self" of Sartre is sovereign—he ascribes a role to the individual

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[3]Jean-Paul Sartre, *Search for a Method,* trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 174.

[4]*Ibid.*, pp. 175, 176.

[5]*Ibid.*, pp. 85-88.

[6]*Ibid.*, p. 99.

[7]*Ibid.*, p. 152.

[8]Wilfred Desan, *The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 308.

not shared by Marx. This present study indicates that Marx underlines with repeated emphasis that man is a *species-being*, that *generic* man is the maker of history and that individuals act according to the determinations of their type. Desan holds that Sartre's conception is more akin to that of Descartes than of Marx:

> The irony of Sartre's situation is that while dreaming of a free and powerful Self that is variously creative and to whom is given the charge of a world, its organization and departmentalization, its grouping and institutionalization, Sartre has in fact created an entity, too isolated in a hostile world to be ever successfully committed to a group or to anything. Descartes does not beget Marx. . . . Sartre has not abandoned Descartes.[9]

This study supports Desan's allegation in that it delineates Marx's naturalistic conception of man, a notion of mankind's solidaric bond, which is evidently lacking in Sartre.

Marx's concept of man as a natural being whose primary activity is productive labor gives an undue emphasis to the importance of the practical in human life. For Marx every human quality ultimately derives its significance from the praxis. That Marx gives ontological status to human productivity serves well the interests of a unified conception of man, but it also tends to oversimplify the complexity of human life. Marx is as open to the charge of imbalance for giving undue weight to the practical as is Hegel for exalting the theoretical. The perspective advanced by T. A. Burkill in which he views man as an

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[9]Wilfred Desan, *The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 308.

active, natural being appears to provide a broader understanding of man. In his book, *God and Reality in Modern Thought*, he does not give ontological status to any specific activity of man as did Marx, but develops his conception by the more general notion of man as an active, species being.[10] Such an approach may be open to the charge of vagueness due to the lack of specificity, yet it seems to be more compatible with the complexity and dignity of man than the Marxian outlook.

Individualism

In his attempt to ascribe a prominent role to the individual, Marx in the end favors the community over the individual. The concept of labor indeed delineates the conditions necessary for the freedom of the individual, but the individual loses prominence in Marx's perspective because he can do little himself to bring about the conditions of freedom. The individual must patiently wait for the massive proletarian revolution before freedom becomes a possibility and a reality. Freedom then is handed to the individual by the collective efforts of the proletariat. Kamenka, for example, criticizes this aspect of Marx's concept of freedom because "the bringing of freedom and enterprise to somebody is not a free but a despotic conception."[11] In this sense Marx's view tends to minimize personal responsibility in

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[10]T. Alec Burkill, *God and Reality in Modern Thought* (Engelwood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), pp. 99-142.

[11]Eugene Kamenka, *The Ethical Foundations of Marxism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p. *x*.

the struggle for freedom. There is no real freedom under the conditions of alienation according to Marx so that individual efforts at effecting freedom are ultimately self-defeating. In contradistinction to Marx's emphasis upon communal activity one might indicate the role which individuals have played in effecting freedom. Has not the struggle for freedom been the struggle of individuals and their followers who perceive an immediate threat to their freedom and with imagination and courage struggle to regain it or open new avenues of freedom? The responsibility to achieve freedom is imminent wherever it is assailed or whenever new paths can be forged to secure a more humane way of life. In the Marxian perspective individual or local efforts appear somewhat futile since it is the collective effort of the proletariat alone that attains freedom.

The inability of the individual to feel a sense of moral obligation in the immediate context of his life brings into question Marx's claim that he has a philosophy of action, a philosophy aimed at changing the world and not merely interpreting it. The only decisive action that significantly alters the course of human history awaits the time when the tensions between the proletariat and capitalist have ripened to a convulsive state. In this sense Marx's outlook is futuristic and is not a philosophy of action for men suffering from alienation. Alienated men receive insights into the nature and cause of their condition but find no way of immediate escape.

The trend today toward the development of powerful centralized governments is in direct contradiction to Marx's proposal that human

government should be situated as close to the individual as possible. Under communism there would be no international, national or state authority, for under these conditions of liberated labor, the responsibility for human government resides in each individual, and therefore all coercive authority from the state may be removed. Once class and human antagonisms are eliminated from society, the coercive state no longer has a purpose for existence, for there will then be no need to continue an institution which reflects the alienated condition of man. Marx praised the Paris Commune for removing the ultimate authority of human government from the national level to the local community. This commendation accords with his general view that humanity is best served when government is situated as close to the individual as possible.

Marx's perspective is likewise in sharp contrast to the modern practices of social reconstruction and rehabilitation. Social planning and action is progressively being allocated to expert social scientists who are functionaries of the state. Matters of life and death are more and more being controlled and guided by these experts who act with the authority of the state. For Marx, the only effective and permanent kind of government is self-government. The ubiquitous presence of official social planners accordingly denotes human slavery. For Marx, man must establish his social relations in such a manner that the state no longer expresses his social responsibility and solidarity. Each individual must consciously act as a species being, free from external constraint and in accordance with the determinations of his type. The society of liberated labor is one where men achieve social accord due

to the harmonious and free nature of their labor relations and not according to the imposition of social regulation by a powerful state.

Theory of Knowledge

The criticism of Marx's epistemological activism brought forth by R. N. Carew Hunt can in part be met by this investigation. In his book, *Marxism Past and Present*, Hunt discovers a lack of clarity in Marx's criterion for true knowledge. He acknowledges that practice is the criterion, or "that the test of the truth is whether they [i.e. ideas] transform the world."[12] The faulty aspect of his criticism lies in the next statement. "But any ideas, if acted upon, may do this, and what we want to know is what particular transformations guarantee the truth of those upon which we have acted. Marx does not tell us this . . ."[13] The allegation is that Marx's criterion is apparently inadequate because it lacks specificity. Marx provides the answer to this critique in his *Theses on Feuerbach* where he gives specificity to the criterion of practice, or praxis.[14] To claim that practice is the criterion for true knowledge does not mean for Marx that all practice is productive of the right kind of knowledge. When praxis serves as the criterion for knowledge, it must for Marx be a specific kind of praxis. That praxis which results in true knowledge is

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[12]R. N. Carew Hunt, *Marxism Past and Present* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1954), p. 34.

[13]*Ibid.*

[14]Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach* in *German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 197-198.

characterized by its dual humanizing effect which for Marx is the transformation of nature by labor for the transformation of the human. The coincidence of this dual role of labor, outlined in the third of his *Theses on Feuerbach*, is possible when praxis is carried out freely and harmoniously.[15] Marx thus does not permit all sorts of practice to count as the criterion of true knowledge, but he does provide a clearer criterion for knowledge than Hunt discovered.

There is another facet to Hunt's criticism which deserves attention. This aspect arises due to speculation respecting what Marx's answer to Hunt's criticism might be. Hunt wonders: "If he means that only those ideas which move the world in the direction of communism have passed the test, he is adopting an arbitrary criterion, and one which only communists would accept."[16] The chapter on epistemology in this investigation shows that Marx's criterion for true knowledge does intend the transformation of life in the direction of communism. Hunt therefore raises a pertinent question as to the general acceptance of Marx's epistemology since it carries with it the acceptance of communism which many reject.

The epistemological activism of F. H. Heinemann resembles that of Marx, and it may be more generally acceptable than Marx's version because it does not anticipate a particular form of society such as

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[15]Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach* in *German Ideology*, *op. cit.*, pp. 197, 198.

[16]Hunt, *op. cit.*

communism.[17] Heinemann formulates *Respondeo, ergo sum,* I respond, therefore I am, as the first axiom for his perspective.[18] Among other things he hopes by this formulation to avoid the subjectivism of Descartes', *Cogito, ergo sum.* For Heinemann, man is a creature of response, "*an animal of increased and creative responsiveness, able to respond on different levels to stimuli coming from many dimensions, and to formulate his potentially free answers in a variety of ways.*"[19] To respond means to show sensitiveness to stimulus by change of behaviour, and this response is "an answer originally given not in words, but in movements, reactions, feelings, impulses, etc."[20] Activity or stimulus precedes response and language; thought is thus a form of response.[21] In agreement with Marx, Heinemann holds that man is an active being whose thinking processes derive their meaning from human activity and not *vice versa.* Knowledge is related to human praxis for Marx. Heinemann comprehends knowledge as an aspect of the stimulus-response relation, for "the stimulus-response relation establishes at the same time and therefore implies a relation of meaning."[22] Heinemann

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[17]F. H. Heinemann, *Existentialism and the Modern Predicament* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1954), pp. 190-204.

[18]*Ibid.*, p. 192

[19]*Ibid.*, p. 197.

[20]*Ibid.*, p. 191.

[21]*Ibid.*, p. 196.

[22]*Ibid.*, p. 193.

views knowledge as a form of action also in the sense of its intent as well as its origin. He says: "The stimulus-response relation makes me participate in the life of the world."[23] As an epistemological activist Heinemann's view resembles Marx's, but Heinemann does not give specificity to the kind of activity which is determinative for the human as is the case with Marx. This broader aspect of Heinemann's concept would seem to be an advance over Marx's epistemology.

Since consciousness for Marx is a reflection of the productive relations and since alienated labor under capitalism only produces a false consciousness, how is it that Marx can claim to have enlightenment when he himself is enmeshed in an alienated society. On his own account of the nature of human thought he cannot establish credibility for his own philosophy, for the alienated state of society creates only a false consciousness of which Marx's thought is a part.

Marx warned against being dominated by 'ideas' as such. In particular he disclosed the perniciousness of Hegelian idealism. The dominant ideas under capitalism are those of the bourgeoisie, and according to his analysis they represent the interests of the privileged. Could not the same allegation be leveled against the possibility of Marx's ideas becoming dominant for he after all was prolific in his creation and promulgation of ideas.

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[23]F. H. Heinemann, *Existentialism and the Modern Predicament, op. cit.*, pp. 196, 197. Another theory of epistemological activism similar to Marx and Heinemann is advanced by S. Alexander. The concepts of *action* and *reaction* instead of stimulus and response characterize his version. Cf. S. Alexander, *Space, Time and Deity*, Vol. I (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1920), pp. 300-304.

Varia

The theory of value held by Marx indicates that his naturalism is not as thorough-going as might be expected. By confining values to the human alone Marx limits his naturalistic perspective. His analysis of commodities discloses the fact that these objects have value due to being the embodiment of human powers. The implication is that external objects in themselves possess no value: only man and his creative, productive efforts have value and impart value to things. The theory of value held by T. A. Burkill, for example, recognizes that human values were anticipated by the infrahuman species in the evolutionary process.[24] Marx in limiting values to the human may not be naturalistic enough.

The theory of labor as delineated by Marx shows that man is a free, creative being who alone shapes his destiny without supernatural attachments. Marx thought that for the liberation of the working class, and consequently of all mankind, it is necessary to tear religious feeling out of the human heart.[25] Belief in God keeps the proletariat in slavery, poverty and degradation. Religious beliefs give an illusory, fictitious consolation; they transfer victory to the unreal sphere and are therefore a hindrance to real victory and liberation. The militant character of Marx's atheism requires above all a change of consciousness. This change, Marx believes, must not occur by prohibitions and punish-

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[24]Burkill, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-142.

[25]Although Marx appears to be anti-religious in his imprecations against religion, this does not preclude the possibility that his

ments of a coercive state but by the establishment of a society founded on liberated labor. Under true communism man rids himself voluntarily of these illusions. The suppression of religion by state authority in Russia does not reflect the teachings of Marx in regard to the method of eradicating religion. Marx believes that man must come to realize through his labor that he is his own end and principle; his only sense of dependency arises from his interdependence with nature. Such a complete break from the supernatural, Marx contends, contributes to harmonious social relations and the general enrichment of life. It seems that Marx does not consider the possibility that the metaphysical structure of man may be one of dependence upon a Supreme Being who is the origin and end of life. When men come to accept consciously the fact that they are their own end and principle, one may wonder whether this could be the very grounds for the hardening of human relations rather than their amelioration because this would seem to provide no check on egotism.

The extreme denouncement by Marx of the use of capital as a demoralizing force in social and economic life tends to diminish the humanitarian quality of his own outlook. He claims that one of the necessary conditions of communism is the elimination of capital, for "it is the universal whore, the universal pander between men and nations. The power to confuse and invert all human and natural qualities, to bring about fraternization of incompatibles, the *divine* power of money,

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viewpoint might be identified as a religion itself. By adopting a broader than usual concept of religion, T. A. Burkill indicates that Marxism can be regarded as a religion. Cf. T. A. Burkill, *God and Reality in Modern Thought, op. cit.*, pp. 207, 208.

resides in its *character* as the alienated and self-alienating species of man."[26] Marx looks primarily at the evil consequences money has upon men but does not seriously ponder the good it is likewise capable of rendering. Does not money assist us as humans in our efforts to bear effectively one another's burdens?

Marx does not explicitly develop a concept of leisure, but there is one implicit in his concept of labor under communism. When men labor over and above the demands of physical existence then this labor appears to be a leisure activity in the Marxian sense. It is not leisure in the sense of idleness, but it is a leisure activity in that it is performed in complete freedom. Such *free* labor, Marx believes, furnishes the necessary condition for men to transform nature for the transformation of human nature. When men achieve this state they stand free in the face of nature and pursue with enthusiasm the task of their own self creation. Such leisure is of the most constructive sort, for it intends the creation of man himself. The only demand in this labor is that imposed by the laborer himself, and this he does for his own exaltation. If indeed Marx can be said to have a concept of leisure, then it is most distinctive in that it takes the laboring man as his model rather than the idle rich. Practical creative activity becomes the primary leisure concern rather than the contemplative model advanced by Plato. Marx's emphasis upon the practical does not remove

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[26]Karl Marx, *Manuscripts* in *Early Writings*, trans. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 166.

from man his role as a reflective being. The contemplative must never be viewed as above or in opposition to the practical but rather as an integral aspect of the human. The work of the 'pure' mathematician, for example, would be performed within the context of a society fully aware of man as a practical being. In this instance the mathematician would seek the all-round development of his personality and accordingly to be an active participant in communal affairs. Marx's concept of leisure is founded on the universal emancipation of mankind from the master-slave relations of an alienated society. Leisure in this instance becomes the privilege of none until it is the privilege of all.

CHAPTER X

EVALUATION II: EDUCATIONAL CRITIQUE

Polytechnic Education

Does Marx set forth basic conceptions which he believes should direct educational efforts? It is evident that he did not develop a systematic philosophy of education, but this does not imply that he furnishes no direction to education. The most basic and distinctive conception he advances for the orientation of education is the polytechnic principle. It is by this principle that Marx attempted to create an integral educational outlook and to mold the development of the immature to the end that they may have a formal preparation for a truly human way of life in the context of an industrialized society. The aim of education as guided by this principle is human excellence, and Marx's notion of human excellence is derived from his concept of man as a natural being who produces freely, consciously and creatively in the face of nature. Man's basic attitude toward life is practical and by development of this attitude in thought and practice the young are given preparation to live harmoniously with their environment. The polytechnic principle shows itself to be a unifying concept of all educative efforts by governing knowledge as a value in education. Such training intends the union of knowledge and action. The value of social adjustment in education finds its realization in the polytechnic principle, for productive activities, technology and science have meaning only in the context of an associated kind of living and are expressive of man's

generic being. Knowledge is thus treated as a form of communal life and should be utilized in turn to enrich social relations. The polytechnic principle therefore becomes the central concept in Marx's educational philosophy and represents his distinctive contribution to the philosophy of education.

This principle of polytechnic education is suggestive of how a suitable concept of a liberal, general education[1] might be formulated for an industrialized society where science and technology are essential ingredients in nearly all productive activities. Marx grounds this conception of education primarily upon his view of man. In other words, he advocates an education suitable for his conception of man. Polytechnic education is also grounded upon the historical development of man. Marx advocates polytechnic education for a society which has achieved an industrialized mode of interacting with nature. His analysis of labor indicates that it had lost, under the capitalist mode of production, its previous charm for the individual. His solution was not to return nostalgically to the ways of the past, although industrialism was fundamentally a harbinger of good, but to discover means whereby man could utilize these new productive forces in such a way that they served human ends. Work thus regains its charm when man gains a sense of mastery over productive forces. Polytechnic education, Marx believes, is the only appropriate mode of education capable of producing a free

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[1]See Chapter VIII, "Labor and Education," p. 197, for a definition of a "liberal, general education."

man in an industrialized society. His conception of man and of the milieu thus constitutes the metaphysical foundations for his idea of a liberal education. Marx's formulation suggests a basis on which the practical as well as the theoretical in education can be achieved because any philosophy of education that gives due emphasis to the practical dimension in education should contain some concept of man as a practical being. John Macdonald sets the relevance of Marx's educational perspective in focus by asserting: "For Marx, *homo* is in his very essence *faber*. This is an idea with which every philosophy of education must come to terms if it is not to become lopsided and inadequate."[2]

Polytechnic education appeared as a necessity to Marx in view of the nature of human labor in an industrialized society. Labor patterns changed such that men felt increasingly detached from reality. New labor relations contributed to a loss of personal involvement in production. In order to cope with this new phenomena new methods of formal preparation became imperative if there was to be a reversal in the progressive alienation of man as Marx saw it. Science gained new prominence in industry which implied that man was increasingly conscious of method in his manipulation of nature. The application of science to industry continues today and demands formal instruction which can not feasibly be obtained in industry. The growth of science and industry has likewise multiplied the number of tasks available such that instruc-

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[2]John Macdonald, *A Philosophy of Education* (Toronto: W. J. Gage Limited, 1965), p. 265.

instruction is imperative if an individual is to be informed only about the occupational opportunities at hand. The intent of polytechnic education is to give the individual a sense of mastery over the world of work so that his creative abilities can be expressed for the sake of his own humanization. The modern trend of "streaming" youngsters at an early age limits their vocational choices. Marx would challenge the humanitarian intent of these practices. Are educators in fact thwarted in their attempts to achieve a truly humanitarian kind of education due to pressures from the industrialists and the state planners?

Polytechnic education nobly aims at providing man with a sense of mastery over productive forces, but this conception appears quite idealistic in view of the accelerated growth of science and technology. Marx advocated instruction in "all" the principles of productivity and in "all" the elementary skills of industry. To acquire the technological knowledge and the associated skills available today would, due to the brevity of life, appear to be beyond the grasp of any given individual. Specialization today accordingly appears as a necessity. Suppose our present level of technological attainments were part of the communist society of free men as envisioned by Marx. To be a free man one must have training in all the basic elements of these technologies in order to move freely from one occupation to another, but this would seem to entail a lifetime of formal education with no time to participate in de-alienated labor which Marx posits as essential to human freedom. Technology and science have doubtless expanded beyond the limits imagined by Marx, and this enlargement requires a

modification of the "poly-" aspect of his educational principle. Marx's general idea of providing an education which prepares the individual to effectively grasp and control reality has abiding value for education.[3] It is obviously impossible to obtain a polytechnic education today in the strict sense of the term, but this does not preclude the possibility of furnishing students with a much broader education such that they do not, due to the narrowness of their training, become a mere cog in a machine.

Marx's insistence that technological training is essential to a liberal education within the context of an industrialized society is being increasingly adopted by educators in the twentieth century because the present mode of life demands it. The rapid development of technology and industry in this century created new and challenging educational problems to which educators have generally responded by accepting technological training as a responsibility of secondary and higher institutions of learning. Contemporary educational thinkers, for most part, would have little patience with any form of educational preparation which discounted the technological context of twentieth century life. The growth of universities in enrollment and expenditure has in large measure been the result of adding technological instruction and research. Secondary schools progressively offer more and more studies of a technological nature. The

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[3]It must not be supposed that Marx held that only training in polytechnics furnished one with a grasp of reality. He also included "mental" education in his scheme as was noted earlier. This would no doubt involve training in the arts and sciences.

growth of technological instruction and research is also enhanced by generous federal aid programs. This growth of technological studies on the secondary and university levels does not however accept the Marxian idea of integrating education into a unified whole by the polytechnic principle. Theoretical studies remain as the central core of education with technological instruction as an important supplement in the context of current existence. The inclusion of both the intellectual and the practical in modern education has no philosophical system which might provide an integral approach to this conglomerate. The continued growth of technological instruction may in time prompt a change of attitude in which something like Marx's polytechnic principle gains prominence as an integrating principle.

Polytechnic Education in the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union claims that Marx's concept of polytechnic education governs their educational endeavors. The link between the Soviet schools and the teachings of Karl Marx received increased importance in 1958 when the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Council of Ministers of the USSR advanced forty-eight theses entitled, *On Strengthening the Relationship of the School With Life and on the Further Development of the System of Public Education in the Country.*[4] These theses intended a major reform in Soviet education and were adopted under the guidance of N. K. Khrushchev. Numerous references are made to

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[4]George S. Counts, *Khrushchev and the Central Committee Speak on Education* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburg Press, 1959), pp. 25-66.

to the teachings of Marx with direct quotations appearing at times, especially in theses three through nine where justification for the general objectives of this new program is delineated.[5] The significance which the polytechnic principle has for this reform is summed up in the seventh thesis:

> The principle of combining education with productive work is set down in the most important documents of the Communist Party.[6]

That the polytechnic principle was employed by the Communist Party to revitalize the schools is suggested by these general recommendations in the ninth thesis:

> In order to strengthen the relationship of the school with life we must not only introduce into schools the teaching of new subjects which give the foundations of knowledge on questions of technology and production, but also arrange for the systematic participation of students in work on enterprises, on collective farms and state farms, on experimental plots, and in school workshops. We must reconstruct the teaching program of the middle school with an emphasis on greater specialization in production in order that boys and girls who graduate from the ten-year school may have a good general education which will open the way to higher education and at the same time prepare them for practical work, inasmuch as the majority of the graduates will be drawn immediately into work in various branches of the national economy.[7]

The idea of integrating "practical work" and the general principles of "technology and production" into their school programs manifests their interests in polytechnic education, but the question remains as to

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[5]George S. Counts, *Khrushchev and the Central Committee Speak on Education* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburg Press, 1959), pp. 33-40.

[6]*Ibid.*, p. 38.

[7]*Ibid.*

whether this is consistent with Marx's conception.

In the first instance it must be noted that Khrushchev and the Central Committee by-passed the central issue of polytechnic education when they neglected to define polytechnic education in terms of what it should do for the individual. The emphasis throughout is upon what these reforms can achieve for "Communism," "the Communist society," "the Communist Party," the "national economy" and "this social order." Horst Wittig's evaluation of education in the Soviet Union today indicates that they fail in this most important facet of polytechnic education.[8] Wittig alleges that the use of the polytechnic idea in Soviet education was found convenient merely as a "slogan" to initiate changes.[9] It is a slogan because it has not the meaning intended by Marx, because it aims not at the maximum development of the individual but of the national economy. Wittig writes:

> In education as it operates in the USSR today, however, the emphasis is unmistakably shifted from the development of the personality to the operation of the planned economy designed to produce the practical workman-technician by the polytechnisation of the educational system. . . . But in practice Soviet education is in so far a cog in the machinery of planned economy as it is obliged to educate man to be a functioning unit in the mechanism if the machine is to run without friction according to the instructions of the CPSU.[10]

The general objectives of these new reforms thus do not in either *theory* or *practice* give a prominent role to the development of the individual as

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[8]Horst Wittig, "Marx on Education: Philosophical Origins of Communist Pedagogy," *Soviet Survey*, No. 30 (October-December, 1959), 77-81.

[9]*Ibid.*, p. 80.

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 81.

underlined by Marx. The use of the term by the Soviets gives them the appearance of being Marxian in outlook whereas in reality their concern is primarily with the advance of their system of state capitalism and not with all-round *human* development.[11]

Freedom and Education

Marx's stand on the local control of education is quite contrary to the current trend toward centralization. He advocated local control in the interests of securing human freedom, for a man is only free if he can and does perform his social responsibilities. To the extent that these functions are assumed by the state, or church, man relinquishes something that rightfully belongs to him as a social being. The control of education must therefore be situated as close to the individual as possible, and for this reason Marx praised the Paris Commune for adopting the policy of local control. Interest today in the local control of education is almost everywhere regarded as unworkable, inefficient, discriminatory and lacking in quality instructional programs. The trend both in Canada and in the United States is toward larger administrative units which increasingly remove the schools away from effective local

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[11]Compare Wittig's critical remarks with those of Nicholas Dewitt, "Polytechnical Education and the Soviet School Reform," *Harvard Educational Review* XXX (Spring, 1960), pp. 95-117. Dewitt largely takes a historical approach in his investigation and concludes that these recent reforms are indeed contrary to the original Marxist and Leninist versions of the basic function of polytechnic education. He holds that present Soviet practices are nothing short of a revival of "narrow monotechnism and straight vocationalism." He makes an enlightening comparison with the earlier Russian experiments at achieving polytechnic education under the leadership of Lenin and concludes that this earlier attempt accords more with Marx's original conception.

control.[12] The advocates of a centralized form of education frequently justify their position on the grounds of efficiency and increased educational opportunities. Is this trend an indication that the concept of freedom in our democratic society is being less valued by placing a higher value on efficiency and on economy, or is this a movement which has never seriously considered, in terms of human freedom, the implications of who controls the schools? If the people of Canada and the United States value highly human freedom, then an inquiry into Marx's concept of freedom in education deserves close scrutiny.

Marx would be highly critical of the Soviet Union's policy of state control of education, for their government has achieved the most effective control over education of any nation today. H. C. Rudman asserts this fact in the concluding portion of his recent book, *Structure and Decision-Making in Soviet Education:*

> Nowhere else in the non-Communist world do we find the power invested in a political party to be so strong, so pervasive, that all governmental agencies act as the legitimizers of party policies and actions.[13]

Another observer, George S. Counts, expresses the all-embracing nature of Soviet educational control and its implications for education:

> The thing haunting the world today, however, is not communism in the long historical meaning of the word. Nor is it the thing

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[12]There is a case for local control and central finance which some advocate. Such a scheme would seem to be acceptable to Marx if effective local control could be secured.

[13]H. C. Rudman, *Structure and Decision-Making in Soviet Education* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 58.

> that Marx and his followers contemplated in the nineteenth century as the social order which would follow the overthrow of capitalism by the universal proletarian revolution.[14]

Counts rightfully disassociates the Soviet practice of totalitarian control of education from the teachings of Karl Marx because for Marx the nature of educational control reflects the degree of freedom men experience in a given social order. As a defender of human freedom and as one deeply concerned for human development, he advocates local control, for this is a social function in which each individual ought to express his unique role as a social being in the transmission of culture to the immature members of society without state or ecclesiastical interference.

Closely allied to Marx's advocacy of local control of education is his insistence upon intellectual freedom, yet the Communists of the Soviet Union apparently do not accept his teaching in this regard. An important facet of a free society for Marx is the free access that all men have to the cultural wealth of all nations. In the Soviet Union the entire range of education and mass media are closely supervised by the Communist Party to reinforce their control over the minds of their citizens. George Counts claims that the Soviet program of 'thought' control "constitutes the most comprehensive and sustained effort in history to reach distant goals by employing all the agencies and processes of the twentieth-century society for molding and training the minds of

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[14]Geroge C. Counts, *The Challenge of Soviet Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), p. 287.

all elements composing a vast population of many nations and peoples."[15] Such practices are clearly contrary to Marx's conception of the communist social order.

Do other nations tend to encourage or suppress intellectual freedom? With the progressive centralization of educational control there is a danger of suppressing educational freedom. Control by larger administrative units is often gained by the promise of lower costs in education. With the shifting of financial responsibilities away from the local community there frequently comes an increased control of the educative process either directly or indirectly by the coercive powers of the state, for he who pays the piper generally calls the tune. Do those who advocate centralization realize that their position may endanger intellectual freedom? There seems to be a belief that increased centralization is a harbinger of good in terms of providing a broader dissemination of knowledge, but does this apparent good occur at the expense of weakening a basic condition of a free society, namely intellectual freedom? There must be a priority of values determined in advance by those attempting to build the best educational system possible for society. Marx, it appears, would assign priority to intellectual freedom over the purported advantage of educating greater numbers of people, for to reify a system of enslavement in statutory law is to develop a pattern of human social order contrary to man's need for freedom.

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[15]George C. Counts, *The Challenge of Soviet Education, op. cit.*, p. 290.

Marx has made a significant contribution to education by showing that even in democratic societies education was dominated by class interests. The modern conception of democracy is hereby disparaged by Marx. Education manifested to Marx the inequality of this concept of democracy, and the persistence of inequality in education is in this century a recurrent theme among educational reformists. For example, G. S. Counts denounced progressive education in 1932 because it had come to reflect "the viewpoint of the members of the liberal-minded upper middle class who send their children to the Progressive schools. . ."[16] The movement was in danger of losing its constructive impact on society unless it abandoned its affinity with this class and took a more universal approach. Theodore Brameld claims that philosophies of education reflect class interests and that these philosophies can be meaningfully treated in terms of their appeal to certain classes in society.[17] He further asserts that it is possible "to characterize the philosophies of education considered above in broadly political terms."[18] These examples demonstrate that the relation of the school to class interests persists today in support of Marx's insight, and this problem presents a challenge to those who strive for equality in education. The Marxian

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[16]George C. Counts, *Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?* (New York: The John Day Company, 1932), p. 7.

[17]Theodore Brameld, *The Use of Explosive Ideas in Education: Culture, Class, and Evolution* (Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1965), p. 139.

[18]*Ibid.*, p. 140.

analysis of this relation deserves the attention of those interested in achieving egalitarian practices in the schools, and his positive conception of a universal type of education may suggest alternative solutions to this problem.

Marx and the Reconstructionists

The optimism expressed by contemporary reconstructionists who believe that the right kind of education can contribute significantly to remedying social ills is not shared by Marx who contends that the wrongs of society can only find their solution in the elimination of alienated labor. Theodore Brameld's reconstructionist views are representative of this modern optimism in education and have particular relevance to this study since he looks to Marx as one who contributes substantially to reconstructionist thinking.[19] Brameld succinctly asserts his own position in a concluding section, "Summary of Beliefs about Education for Democratic Power," in his book, *Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education*.

> The second thesis is that the educational profession, and therefore public education as a whole, will become effective instruments for the remaking of civilization only to the degree that teachers become courageous, purposeful, united, and aggressive. Alliance with the forces of expansion, particularly with organized labor as the vanguard of these forces, is the key to this accomplishment.[20]

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[19]Theodore Brameld, *Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education* (New York: The Dryden Press, 1956), pp. 29-32, 101, 102.

[20]*Ibid.*, p. 340.

The claim here is that both teachers and education "will become effective instruments" to transform our defective way of life. Teachers must cast aside their customary role and assume courageously an active role in this task. An alliance with organized labor links the educator with progressive forces in society and thereby assures education's involvement with a vital force that can add the necessary vigor to the movement to achieve this momentous task.

Brameld's hopes are pinned primarily on education, for he states later that his greatest concern is: "Can education-and-culture become powerful enough 'while time remains'?"[21] The hour is late and the issue is critical and the only "Messiah" in view for Brameld is education in its role of purifying contemporary culture. The key person in this reconstructionist movement is the educational philosopher, for Brameld ascribes to him the prestigous role of "policy maker."[22] The educational philosopher should moreover be actively involved "at every stage in the effort to formulate and translate into practice new designs for education itself."[23] The leadership role of this class of individuals within the larger class of professional educators is further expressed in these words:

> Lastly, his role as policy maker is that of creative visionary —of suggester and projector towards better ways of performing necessary educational tasks.[24]

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[21]Theodore Brameld, *Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education, op. cit.*, p. 396.

[22]Theodore Brameld, *Education for the Emerging Age: Newer Ends and Stronger Means* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), pp. 210-214.

[23]*Ibid.*, p. 213.

[24]*Ibid.*, p. 214.

The entire educational effort is focused upon transmitting enlightenment to the learner and above all inculcating in him a zeal to put into action his learning:

> The reconstructionist believes that they can do so, but only if education, above all other agencies, enables young people to face the problems of our time honestly and fearlessly, to utilize whatever contributions such ideas as class may have for them.[25]

At another point Brameld assigns to education the role of actively participating in the evolutionary development of mankind. He accepts the belief that the "human mind is understood as the most important mutation by which the human animal, thanks to natural selection, is able to shape the order of evolution, to accelerate its development, and to progress toward human goals that are agreed upon as desirable."[26] Education has to this end the role of producing a new intellect in man, one capable of actively controlling the evolutionary process for the good of man.[27]

Marx's criticism of Brameld would be similar to that he adduced in the third thesis on Feuerbach.[28] Brameld's paternalistic conception of pedagogy is his basic error. Brameld, Marx would argue, attributes to ideas the power to remake life. He stands in this sense in the rationalist tradition that believes in the power of reason to emancipate

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[25]Theodore Brameld, *The Use of Explosive Ideas in Eduction, op. cit.*, pp. 138, 139.

[26]*Ibid.*, pp. 198, 199.

[27]*Ibid.*, p. 212.

[28]Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*, in *The German Ideology, Parts I and III* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 197, 198.

mankind from his stupidity and prejudices. Brameld's paternalistic outlook further allots the task of social reconstruction to a select, enlightened class who stand as mankind's Deliverer. For Marx such a presumptuous attitude implies the acceptance of antagonistic class divisions as the means to social reform and of the belief that the enlightened class somehow has managed to stand outside society and history as its protagonists. Marx argues that such cannot be the case for "the educator himself must be educated."[29] The education he needs is the education afforded by the transformation of alienated labor into liberated labor by "*revolutionary practice*."[30] Man creates new ways of life by altering productive activities. Ideas are reflections of the nature of the relation man sustains with nature by his labor. Since all men come under the influence of these determinative forces in society, none can escape. Any group that supposes itself to be above these basic forces expresses the alienated condition of man by divorcing theory from practice and only adds to the aggravation of the human plight. Brameld accordingly exemplifies the alienated predicament of modern society and represents the separation of theory and practice by adopting a paternalistic conception of pedagogy. Brameld seeks to arrive at a democratic, egalitarian way of life by means contrary to these principles.

Marx's egalitarian conception of pedagogy exposes the non-egalitarian, undemocratic conception held by Brameld, but Marx's conception can only be

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[29]Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach, op. cit.*, p. 198.

[30]*Ibid.*

used to criticize Brameld negatively and can produce no positive assistance for the grave problem Brameld confronts. Egalitarian principles apparently afford no place for the individual who has insight into a major enigma and who seeks to this end to influence the masses. Such a paternalistic outlook would elevate one part of society over the other. Brameld is faced with what he believes is the impending collapse of civilization. His recommendations are aimed at doing something at once to save the ship. Marx claims that clamor of this sort fails to get to the root of the matter because life is only emancipated from the weakening effects of alienation initially by the proletariat who establishes a society free from the principle of private property. Brameld must patiently forbear and wait for this emancipation. Such a view thwarts Brameld's sense of moral obligation. Marx thus withholds from Brameld the claim to be egalitarian and offers no immediate course of action for one who wishes to reconstruct society consistent with egalitarian principles.

One facet of this conflict between the views of Brameld and Marx centers in the problem of deciding who will be the teacher for mankind. Brameld selects the teacher by reconstructionist criteria. Marx refuses to admit any teacher, for generic man teaches himself and thereby recreates himself by his productive activities. Marx's view is unrealistic, for the consequence of such a position is to leave society, as it were, in a vacuum—someone will surely step in and assume the role of teacher whether it is the state, the church, the teaching profession, the home, a revolutionary or conservative political movement, and so on. Brameld's view may in some respects be more

realistic since it makes a concrete proposal for a teacher, but his suggestion can always be challenged by dissenters. It appears that such a controversy has no final solution because both perspectives assume that man is the measure of all things.

An alternative solution accepted by some is to adopt the position that the metaphysical structure of man is one of dependence upon a Supreme Being. In this instance, appeal is made to the wisdom of this transcendent God, who alone is both outside and in the process of history. Such an appeal satisfies, though in a limited way, the paternalist who feels the need for immediate wisdom and the egalitarian who refuses to accept any person or group of men superior to others. Whichever solution contemporary society finally accepts, it is hoped that the use of coercive state powers as a basis for selecting the 'Teacher' will be rejected, for such a choice clearly defeats the realization of human freedom.

Varia

The contribution which the Marxian perspective can make for the improvement of contemporary education has not been fully appreciated. The lack of attention to his imaginative ideas may be due in part to the frequent allegations that he was futuristic in his outlook and therefore has little in the way of constructive advice to offer education today which must find solutions for a world torn by war, class and racial tensions, and so on. Such a view of Marx, for example, is expressed by John W. Donohue in his book, *Work and Education: The Role of Technical*

Culture in Some Distinctive Theories of Humanism. He writes:

> Marx and Engels had nothing very constructive to say about the improvement of the schools they saw around them. After all, their eyes were on the mounting wave of the future which would soon engulf all contemporary forms. At the same time, their futuristic and "scientific" theory disinclined them to attempt descriptions of education in that new world . . . . But from the few pages that are devoted to education and from the general principles of the system it is possible for one to get some notion of what Marx and Engels expected in the schools of the future.[31]

This quotation is taken from his chapter, "The Marxian Apotheosis of Work." It is indeed true that Marx anticipated the arrival of communism, and his remarks are at times set forth in the context of this future society of liberated men, but it is not true to say that Marx said "nothing very constructive" about education in his day. For example, he made significant statements regarding the educational ideals of the Paris Commune. His influence upon the First International in regard to an educational program merits serious consideration. His reactions to the Factory Acts in England indicate that he was concerned about the education of the working man in his day. Marx did have a concern for education in his day and what he writes upon the subject, though limited in extent, provides valuable insights into the implications of industrialization, technology and science for modern education. These insights deserve much more attention than educators have given them, for the issues of human freedom and dignity which Marx raises are recurrent issues today.

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[31]John W. Donohue, *Work and Education: The Role of Technical Culture in Some Distinctive Theories of Humanism* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959), pp. 49, 50.

Marx advocated at one point (in his "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional Council")[32] the improvement of educational opportunities for the working class with a view to raising their social status above that of the capitalist class. Since this recommendation was made at a later period in his life, the question arises as to whether Marx had second thoughts on the advisability of urging a proletarian revolution. Advances in science and technology had equipped the political leaders who controlled the various national states with unprecedentedly efficient instruments of coercion. These advances in weaponry in Marx's day may have contributed to his reconsideration of the problem of finding a way for the proletariat to gain a dominant position in society, for these new weapons had made nonsense of the old techniques of popular revolt. Marx does not state that these are his reasons for his educational proposals, but it remains a point of speculation since in his earlier writings he had envisioned nothing but an increased misery for the proletariat who would in time overthrow capitalist domination by means of popular revolt.

That political leaders today have used science and technology to develop the world's most efficient weapons of coercion, raises serious doubts about the possibility of there ever being a popular revolt as envisioned by Marx. Not only do political leaders have bigger and better instruments of coercion but they also have and utilize instruments

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[32]Karl Marx, "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional Council," *The General Council of the First International: 1864-1866* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, no date), p. 346.

of persuasion imcomparably superior to those at the disposal of earlier rulers. Not only do they make use of the press, radio and television, but entire educational systems come under their influence. What possible escape route could Marx discover for the proletariat today? The important question is what are we in the twentieth century doing to lessen the possibilities of tyrannical rule and to increase the possibilities for a society of free men?

Marx thought that the education of the proletariat in bourgeoisie-dominated schools tended to heighten the tensions between these social classes by alerting the proletarians to their plight and by equipping them with the intellectual shrewdness to cope with their dilemma. Is it not possible that under such a system, the dominant class provides that kind of training which purposely placates the proletariat with a view to reducing these tensions? Capitalism also evidently ameliorates its workers through mass media by extolling the material advantages of the system. Do not all these attempts at propaganda make the individual more receptive to bourgeois ideas and a more willing participant in the system? Rather than bourgeois education and persuasion enlarging social tensions everything favors the possibility that the dominant class will continue to employ these means to their ends.

It is Marx's contention that the character of the school bears a relation of dependency to the nature of the labor process. This principle appears as one worthy of serious investigation by educational sociologists. Do the schools fundamentally follow the changing patterns in industry? If so, then an analysis and a comparison of industrial

relations and of educational practices should indicate whether the school suffers from 'cultural lag' or whether its training is realistic.

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